Dennis O'Brien
GAY MARRIAGE?

COMMONWEAL

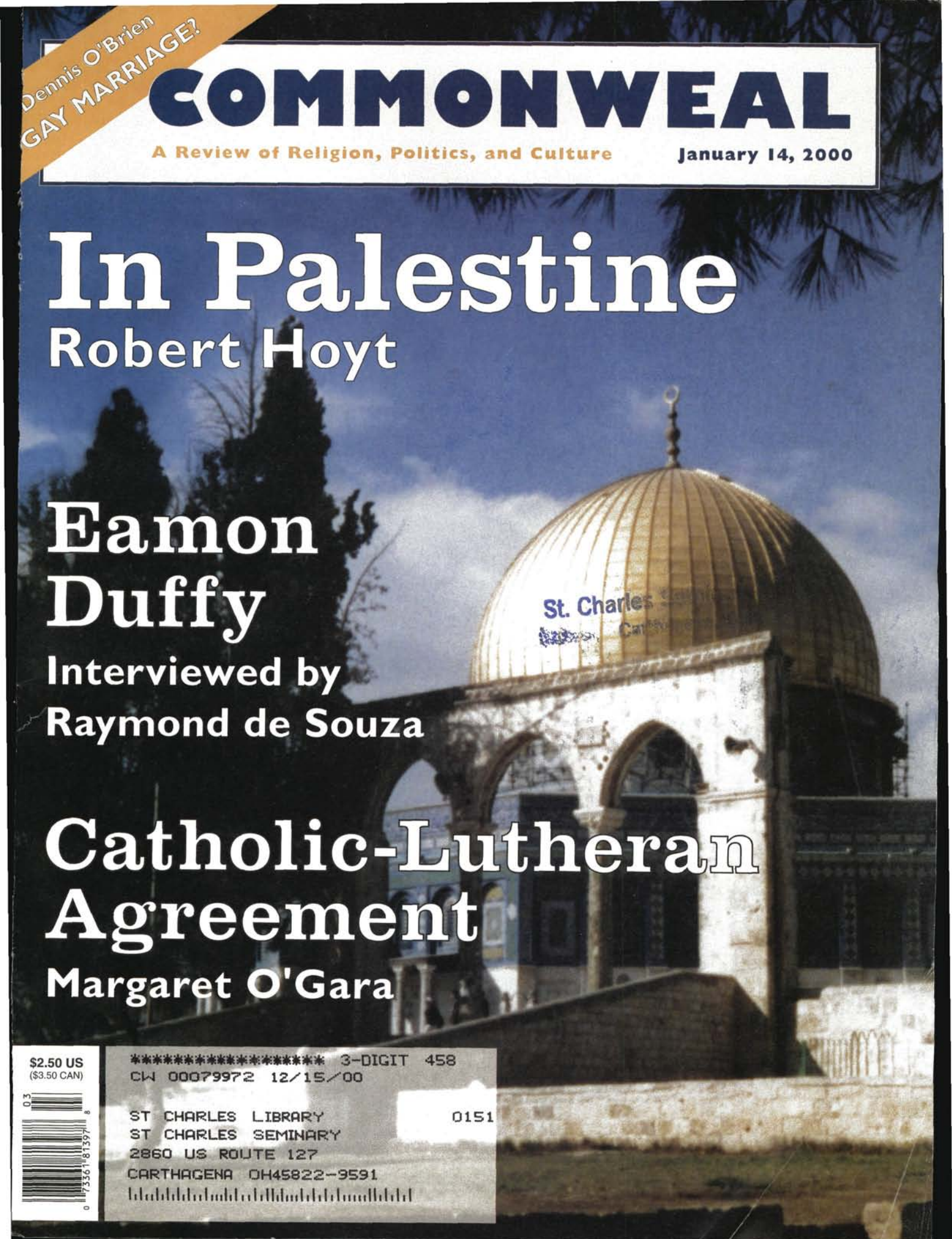
A Review of Religion, Politics, and Culture

January 14, 2000

In Palestine
Robert Hoyt

Eamon Duffy
Interviewed by Raymond de Souza

Catholic-Lutheran Agreement
Margaret O'Gara



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To the Editors

Ach, himmel!

The cartoon politicians in your issue of December 3, 1999 [page 19], who enter the Reichstag fearful that a cry of *"Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Furher* [*sic*]" will land them in trouble are, of course, correct. Their plight, however, seems more linguistic than political.

A blessed and typo-free millennium.

(REV.) ROBERT P. IMBELLI
Newton Centre, Mass.

Reason to renew

The December 3, 1999 issue provided more than enough reason to renew my subscription. Paul Baumann on George Weigel's biography of John Paul II is a revelation. I always thought there was something...about that "worship...with one's body," and now I find it stated in a voice more powerful than my own. Way to go: Simple truth is often more powerful than rhetoric.

The editorial, "Mandate from Rome," is honest, if discouraging, especially to one who teaches in a state school. And it's nice to hear from Jo McGowan as a person (I've used other of her writings as examples in class) and as a commentator on U.S./world education. And that's only three wonderful features. Keep up the good work. JOAN HUBER
Allison Park, Pa.

Add gin & a slice of lime

How little we know each other even after all these years! I never realized what a humorist Paul Baumann can be until I read his "Notebook" [December 3, 1999] on the pope's ideas about conjugal love. It was the most hilarious piece I've seen in a Catholic magazine in ages. It deserves to be made required reading for every student of Catholic moral theology; it would lighten his/her load considerably. Tonic for a parched soul.

ANDREW A. GALLIGAN
Tracy, Calif.

Defending Weigel & JP II

Paul Baumann's "Crossing the Threshold" describes his encounter with George Weigel's *Witness to Hope* as a "titanic struggle" and "not a light penance." I found the papal biography to be one of the most enjoyable and grace-filled reads of the year. And whereas Baumann sarcastically ridicules the work's presentation of John Paul II's "Theology of the Body," I found Weigel's concise, clear, and accurate presentation of the quinquennium of catechetical addresses perhaps the greatest triumph and contribution of a work filled with so many of them.

In my ten years of studying and teaching the pope's theology of the body and catecheses on human love, with high school and university students, engaged and married couples, Catholics and atheists, I have witnessed what Weigel describes as this "theological time bomb" detonate within so many varied hearts and minds.

The pope's genius, which Weigel captures, is in integrating the Christian notion of human love—giving one's life to and for another—within the context of the experience of life and love as a whole. Love is opposed to selfishness and to using anyone else as a means to self-gratification or self-fulfillment.

(REV.) ROGER J. LANDRY
Vatican City

Sex & the pope

In the issue of November 19, 1999, Cardinal Francis George declared that liberal Catholicism is an exhausted project, and even Peter Steinfels acknowledged internal disintegration from intellectual poverty in that venerable old house. In the issue of December 3, Paul Baumann provides ample evidence of the decline.

In his "Crossing the Threshold" column, Baumann takes to task both John Paul II and his recent biographer, George Weigel, for an unrealistic treatment of human sexuality. Rather than engage the ideas offered in John Paul's "Theology of the Body," Baumann merely sneers at what he evidently considers papal naiveté, and instead of arguments offered to demonstrate where Weigel's reading of the pope is defective, Baumann only ridicules the suggestion that all human life—and therefore human sexuality—is grounded on the Law of the Gift.

Perhaps Baumann believes that human sexuality is about something other than interpersonal communion created by mutual self-donation, but he doesn't say exactly what that is. Without providing serious alternatives to John Paul's ideas, Baumann leaves the impression that the best liberal Catholicism can do these days is defend the ersatz understanding of sexuality offered by the sexual revolution. If human sexual behavior is not governed by the Law of the Gift, then what does govern it? The pleasure principle?

(REV.) JAY SCOTT NEWMAN
Charleston, S.C.

The author replies:

How about the "Get a Sense of Humor" principle?

But seriously—if Father Newman insists—my little essay was an effort to introduce a note of levity into the discussion of sex I found in Weigel's book. It is my impression that God joined sex to laughter as truly as he commanded the first couple to be mirthful and multiply.

I'm disappointed that Father Newman found the article to be yet another symptom of the decline of Western civilization. I feel compelled to note, however, that nowhere does he mention, let alone defend, the pope's views on contraception. This is not surprising. Whatever shortcomings liberal Catholicism may display, detailed refutation of the church's teaching on contraception is not among them. Suffice it to say, the Law of the Gift and the pleasure principle are not the only alternatives we have to choose from.

Father Landry's concerns are roughly parallel to Father Newman's. It's utterly true that "[l]ove is opposed to

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COMMONWEAL

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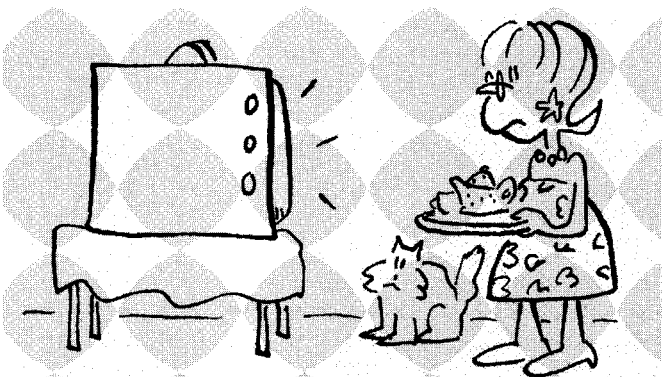

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selfishness and to using anyone else as a means of self-gratification or self-fulfillment." But it's not a new idea and the pope is far from the only person to express such convictions; even atheists have been known to harbor such sentiments. What we disagree about is whether contraception transforms marital sex into sinful self-gratification. The pope's positive remarks about love and sex don't make his arguments about contraception any more persuasive.

As I wrote in the essay, Weigel's book "has many fine things in it," but it is too adulatory and too long. PAUL BAUMANN

Who is Jesus?

I have not yet read Roger Haight's book, yet I wish John Cavadini [Correspondence, November 19, 1999] had been a bit more careful when he wrote that "Jesus not only mediates God, but also *is* God." The teaching of the Catholic church is that the Lord Jesus Christ is "God *from* God, Light *from* Light, true God *from* true God." Whatever a Christian says about Christ is *essentially* specified by the profession of an *inextricable and mutual bond between Jesus Christ and the Living God*. Accordingly, nowhere does the magisterium teach: "Jesus is God"; no Catholic theologian can afford to reduce what the creed says to something a little more manageable for purposes of debate.

Whether Roger Haight pulls off his claim that Jesus' relatedness to the Father can be done justice by means of "symbol" remains to be seen, at least by me; Rahner's famous essay on the theology of symbol certainly suggests the possibility. For John Cavadini to write "mere symbol" is unworthy of a Catholic theologian—pardonable, perhaps, but a misguided concession to rationalism.

I have been accused, in learned company, of "reducing the faith to a bunch of metaphors"; in reply I explained that we speak in metaphors not to reduce the ontological intensity of the faith-realities that face us, but to put them in high relief. Could the same apply to "symbol"? In any case, it is worth remembering that the great Athanasius himself made his peace with the Homoiousians. And Richard Hanson's *The Searth for the Christian Doctrine of God* remains worth rereading. FRANZ JOSEF VAN BEECK, S.J.

Chicago, Ill.

The writer is senior professor of theology at Loyola University Chicago.

The reviewer replies:

If "true God from true God" is not sufficient (though I'm not sure why it would not be), there is the formula of Chalcedon ("Our Lord Jesus Christ is true God and true man"), Leo's *Tome*, ("Who is true God, and the same is true man"), and the Sixth Ecumenical Council ("Our Lord Jesus Christ is true God, our God, One of the Holy Trinity"). There are other authorities as well, but these should suffice.

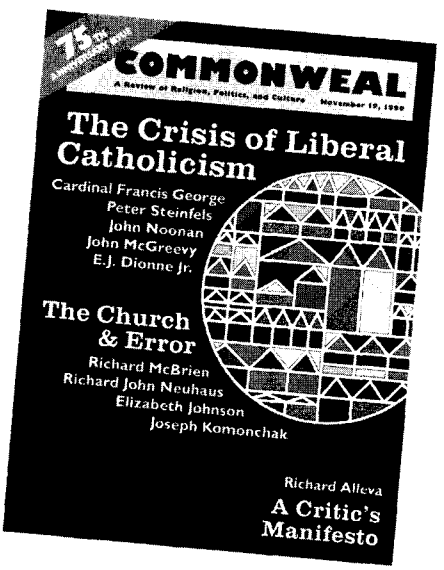
Is it "unworthy of a Catholic theologian to write 'mere symbol'"? Only if in an unqualified, absolute way. My point was carefully controlled, namely, that one particular definition of symbol (Haight's), used in one particular way (of Jesus, to explain the central Christian claim about him), ends up making Jesus "merely a symbol" because the definition cannot adequately distinguish Jesus, whom the grammar of Christian faith calls "God," from any other symbol of God, living or inanimate, in Christianity or any other religion, and in fact succeeds only in separating "Jesus" from "God."

As for the charge of rationalism, my review explicitly defends the way in which faith should restructure the categories of reason, and in particular defends mysteries which Haight's Christology sets aside (the mystery of the *Theotokos*, and of God's suffering as a human being in time), but which the traditional formulas are meant to preserve.

I will be happy to debate the claims of my review in more detail with Father van Beeck when he has read the book that elicited them.

JOHN CAVADINI

The special 75th anniversary double issue of **Commonweal** (November 19, 1999) on the CRISIS OF LIBERAL CATHOLICISM offers a stimulating, multi-faceted discussion, featuring: Cardinal Francis George, Peter Steinfels, John Noonan, John McGreevy, and E.J. Dionne, Jr.



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Hype, history & a new year

As the new year and new century dawns, we have much to be grateful for, not the least of which is that all the yammering about the millennium has finally reached its own End Time. From the interminable impeachment of William Jefferson Clinton to the false apocalypse of Y2K to the endless hype that gave us *Talk* magazine, the bullish stock market, and the promise of a Donald Trump presidential bid, 1999 threatened not only to usher in a new century but to last a century as well. Looking back, a hard-earned obscurity is all that can really be hoped for when it comes to the likes of Monica Lewinsky, Ken Starr, the Brooklyn Museum's "Sensation" show, Bob Dole's efforts to peddle Viagra, and Newt Gingrich's impersonation of an outraged moralist. (Feel free to add your least favorite names to this list.) Still, most of what was with us last year—and the years before—will accompany us into the new century. No one knows what the future holds, except that it holds a good deal of the past.

The recent debates among the candidates for the Republican presidential nomination, for example, suggest that the on-again, off-again dalliance between religion and politics may heat up during this year's race for the White House. There is little in principle that is worrisome about the forthrightness with which the Republican candidates have proclaimed the importance of their religious views in shaping their political convictions—provided, of course, that such proclamations are candid, not cosmetic. In that light, Texas Governor George W. Bush's choice of Jesus as his favorite "philosopher" did appear a bit stagey, perhaps especially to Bush's former fraternity brothers at Yale and even to many people who share Bush's sense of Jesus' palpable presence in their lives. The governor's unwillingness or inability to explain exactly how Jesus had transformed his life raised similar suspicions. Religious conversion can be a powerful force for good, but it is not a self-validating credential for public office. To the extent that the 2000 campaign consists of competing professions of faith, the most outspokenly agnostic candidates—should they come forward!—may begin to look better and better.

Agnosticism—at least when it comes to politics and religion, or even the politics of religion—should continue to be an invaluable attribute as the new century unfolds. Last month the Vatican announced the long-awaited beatification of John XXIII. Welcome news. Evidently not wanting to upset the perfect ideological balance of the celestial spheres, however, the Vatican also announced that Pius IX, the man who gave us the "Syllabus of Errors" and the doctrine of papal infallibility, was also being elevated. This is the sort of ticket balancing that would make a Chicago ward-heeler, if not a saint, proud.

Agnosticism also seems to be in order in New York State, where voters seeking to fill the Senate seat being vacated by Daniel Patrick Moynihan are faced with a duo as unlikely as that of John XXIII and Pius IX. The choice in November is likely to be between First Lady Hillary Clinton and New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani—a heavyweight confrontation that may update the definition of the term Hobson's choice. The sincerity of Mrs. Clinton's claim of a deep and abiding interest in local politics—let alone her New York residency or love for the Yankees—is only rivaled by Giuliani's operatic brand of cultural politics and bureaucratic

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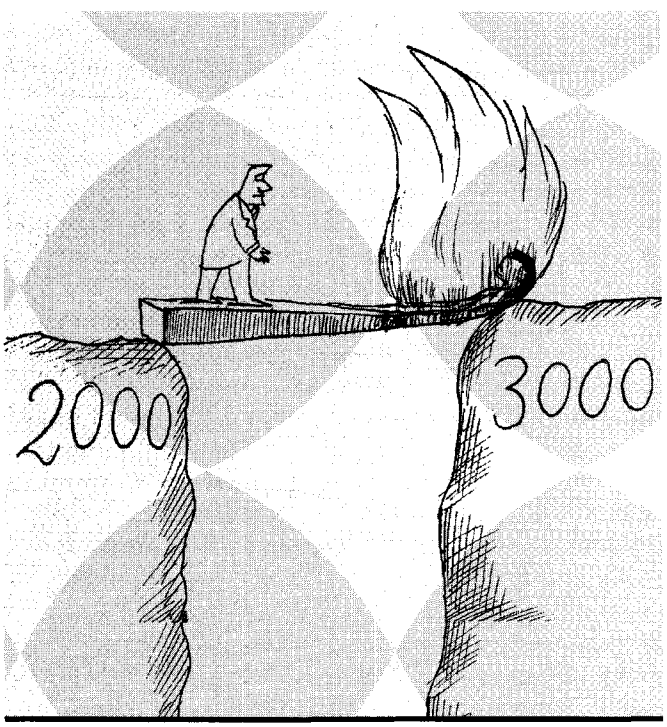
warfare. Whether New Yorkers want to see the mayor's tough-love social policies given a national stage in Washington is doubtful. But whether New York wants to be responsible for extending the run of the Clinton follies is perhaps even more doubtful. If hopelessly simplistic arguments about Catholic bashing (from the right and left) or the plight of the homeless (from the left and right) are to dominate the state's public debate for the rest of the year, people may begin to long for the Y2K apocalypse. In fact, even the linkage of John XXIII and Pius IX begins to look good in this light.

None of the light-hearted rumination above is meant to denigrate Pope John Paul II's more serious hopes for this Jubilee Year. The pope's call for the church to examine its own history of intolerance, and his repeated efforts to apologize for the errors and sins of his predecessors, is one of the most dramatic and inspiring initiatives modern Catholicism has witnessed. And it is worthy of emulation by secular leaders as well. Certainly in the West, the broad consensus across ideological camps on the need for third-world debt relief—something the pope has eagerly endorsed—should be heeded. How to effect that relief so that it benefits the truly needy and not merely those currently in positions of power is the more difficult question. But the need to alleviate the burden is not.

Closer to home, the United States needs to significantly modify criminal justice policies that now place 2 million people in prison and jail. The United States has more people in prison than any other country in the world, with two-thirds of those incarcerated serving time for nonviolent offenses. Much of this crisis can be attributed to mandatory sentencing laws that often send first-time drug offenders to prison for fifteen or more years. Again, there is a growing consensus that incarceration rates this high are both morally scandalous and counterproductive. Nothing produces criminals like a prison. The impact on minority communities has been especially devastating, with one-third of black men now embroiled in the criminal justice system. Other ways must be found to deter crime, with drug and alcohol treatment programs as the first alternative for nonviolent offenders.



If progress could be made in the next year on these two issues, the "real" arrival of the millennium in 2001 would be an even greater cause for rejoicing. That won't be easy. But 1999 did give some reason for optimism. After all, who ever imagined that Microsoft's monopoly could be seriously challenged? Or that Donald Trump—possibly in answer to the fervent prayers of New Yorkers—would discover that he wanted to live in Washington, D.C.?

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JOHN GARVEY

GIVE ME YOUR TIRED, YOUR POOR...

The invitation still stands

This Christmas marked the seventh year during which I have served as pastor of an Orthodox church. The changes we have gone through have been remarkable for what sometimes feels like a relatively brief time, and at other times feels like an eternity. In some ways they show in microcosm things happening all over America—including the effects of immigration, the reasons people come here, what they love and don't love about being in America. At the other side are American attitudes toward immigration, and the problems involved in absorbing people from a very different culture.

When I first came to Saint Nicholas I knew it was part of the Albanian Archdiocese of the Orthodox Church in America. At the time I arrived it was a small parish, about eighty members, not all of whom attended with any regularity. Most of the members were middle-aged, family people, assimilated Americans of Albanian descent. There were a few older members who had been born in Albania, and a number of people from Greek and Arab backgrounds who liked celebrating the liturgy in English. The main concern was keeping the parish alive, trying to attract new members or win back people who had drifted away. There were a small handful of recent immigrants from Albania, but the population as a whole was American in culture, and fairly affluent.

With the collapse of communism our situation changed radically. We noticed new faces every Sunday. About one-third to one-half of the people in church were immigrants, and at first the crowd was fluid. Not all were Christians; some were Muslims looking for help in a new country. That was fine—that's what the coffee hour is for. We had to do what we could with referrals, while making it clear to people reared in a Communist society that the church was not primarily a social service agency. Gradually the fluidity gave way to a solid core of families who were there every Sunday and who cared about Orthodoxy. Now the church is full every Sunday, sometimes full to overflowing. Growth is no longer a pressing concern; dealing with growth is.

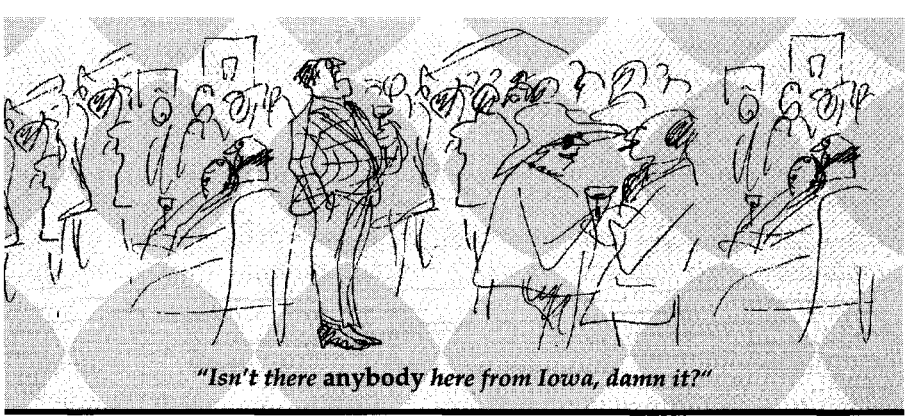
At first some of the Americans spoke negatively about the new arrivals. "They are different; they aren't like us or our parents," they would say. This was due in part to the fear of change. This was no longer the cozy community (dying, but cozy) they were used to. And these Albanians were different: They had been through years of a persecution most Americans could not begin to understand. In some of them, years under communism had produced a lethal combination of cynicism and naiveté, a conviction that things had to be done stealthily, that no public official ever tells the truth. (That's only true about half of the time here.) But most were simply hard-working people trying to make it in a country which isn't easy on immigrants, and which seemed at the time to be going through another nativist spasm.

They were also, many of them, poor. Suddenly a church that had a preponderance of members who lived on Long Island and commuted into Queens for services was full of people living in Queens, Brooklyn, and the Bronx, people who worked for low wages or lived on welfare. Some of them had to be taught how to open bank accounts. (Their Albanian experience had made them suspicious of banks). A number of people in the parish tried to help the newcomers find work. Most did. The biggest barrier for some was, and is, English. But many had a decent command of English before coming, and many more have picked it up in classes and on the job since.

Language became an issue for some of our congregation. Some wanted more Albanian in the liturgy; others felt that this would alienate our non-Albanian members, as well as the American Albanians and newcomers who preferred English. Many of the newcomers are highly conscious of their having come to America, and although they are happy to belong to a largely Albanian church, they have told me that they prefer the liturgy in English. (Interestingly, the most vocal proponents of Albanian were Americans with Albanian nationalist sentiments.) We repeat a few prayers in Albanian, but the liturgy is otherwise in English.

One problem for the newcomers was that for a long time they felt like guests in our community, not members. This is where I learned something about the religious and social importance of those parish events that can often seem more like a nuisance than a blessing.

For years our parish has held a flea market as a fund raiser. It takes weeks of work, it can be exhausting, and we



"Isn't there anybody *here from Iowa, damn it?"*

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approach it with something like dread every year. But after the first year the newcomers got involved (they were recruited), I noticed a change: The two communities began mixing more, and have merged into one community. And the coffee hour that follows every liturgy is another important nonreligious event, without which we would be less of a community.

By the time this column appears I will be in the middle of house blessings, which always follow Theophany. Among Albanians, hospitality is the essential virtue. It is especially moving to receive so much generosity from people, many of whom are poor and struggling. It is also interesting to hear their reactions to America, and to the church in America. I keep remembering family stories about my immigrant ancestors and how hard they had to work. The Albanians I know are not uncritical of America, but they love it. Contrary to some of the anti-immigrant rhetoric, they haven't come here simply to make it materially, though they are happy to be in a country where this can be done.

It isn't easy. Many are highly educated but have to clean buildings and hotel rooms for a living. Former engineers work construction; former doctors look for jobs in labs. Our church custodian was the principal of a high school and taught mathematics in Albania. Most of the younger people in this situation are going to night school after their exhausting daytime jobs.

They love and relish the freedom, and the diversity, of this country. They are delighted to be in a place where they can worship freely. Under the regime of the dictator Enver Hoxha, there was a determined attempt to eradicate all religion. Most of the baptisms I do are for adults and young people who could not be baptized in Albania. Their attitude is something like, "I want to be an Orthodox Christian and you can tell me what it means later." We talk about the most basic aspects of the gospel message, the creed, the meaning of baptism and the Eucharist, and then I baptize them.

It's an interesting congregation. I am writing this on Sunday. At this morning's liturgy the congregation included a lot of Albanians (of course), some people of Russian background, a couple of Egyptian Copts, a couple of Greeks, and two large Eritrean families. It's a cliché, but a good and true one: Only in America. □

Margaret O'Gara

LUTHERANS & CATHOLICS

Ending an old argument

How long does it take to resolve an argument? It took Lutherans and Roman Catholics more than 450 years to reconcile their differences over justifying grace. But they enter the new millennium with a breakthrough agreement that gives a common teaching on justification and ends mutual condemnations.

"Developments have taken place which not only make possible, but also require the churches to examine the divisive questions and condemnations and see them in a new light," Lutherans and Roman Catholics said in a historic Joint Declaration of the Doctrine of Justification, signed by representatives of the pope and the Lutheran World Federation in Augsburg, Germany on October 31, 1999.

Make no mistake about it: This is an important ecumenical breakthrough. The teaching about God's justifying grace was at the heart of the Reformation debates in the sixteenth century, and Luther made it his central emphasis. Both the decrees of the Council of Trent and Lutheran confessional documents included condemnations of the other's position as they understood it, condemnations that have continued to influence how each church sees the other. Now the two churches have reached "a consensus on basic truths of the doctrine of justification." In the light of this consensus, they conclude, "the corresponding doctrinal condemnations of the sixteenth century do not apply to today's partner."

This Declaration has special significance because it is a joint action, not just a theoretical analysis. In this joint action involving the two churches at the level of worldwide ministries, they teach in common where they once condemned; then they declare that those earlier condemnations no longer apply to the partner today. The ecumenical movement has reached many theological agreements, but here the agreement is also received and acted on by the two churches in an official way. The Joint Declaration thus functions as a kind of reception of fifty years of scholarly work that has prepared the theoretical ground for this breakthrough. At the same time, it is a joyous, celebratory event where Christians recognize in each other a common teaching on this central issue for the first time in 450 years. We should not overlook the value of this kind of action for the healing of divisions.

What basis does the Declaration give to explain its dramatic conclusions? Fundamentally, it teaches that the two traditions on justification are actually complementary, not contradictory. Christians share the conviction that God's salvation is a gift that makes human beings "justified" or righteous before God. But Lutherans and Roman Catholics use different emphases to explain this justifying grace from God and its effects. Once thought to be contradictory, these different emphases are presented in the Declaration as two valuable approaches to the same basic faith consensus, each offering a helpful and complementary insight about grace.

For example, the Declaration says, because Lutherans wished to show that only God's saving action in Christ and nothing else is the basis of justification, they emphasized the distinction between this justifying action and the renewal of life that follows. But Roman Catholics, more interested in the renewing effects of grace, tended to emphasize the trans-

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forming effects of grace in a Christian life active in faith, hope, and love.

Are these opposed? No, says the Declaration, since "we confess together that sinners are justified by faith in the saving action of God in Christ....Such a faith is active in love and thus the Christian cannot and should not remain without works. But whatever in the justified precedes or follows the free gift of faith is neither the basis of justification nor merits it." Common confession on this topic and the other related topics is so basic that the remaining differences "are no longer the occasion for doctrinal condemnations."

The Declaration uses an interesting approach to show that affirmations used by one church tradition are not denials of the other church's teaching. So, it explains, when Lutherans call the justified "sinners" and their continuing opposition to God "truly sin," still "they do not deny that, despite this sin, they are not separated from God." But Roman Catholics, while naming the inclination toward sin in justified people "concupiscence," not sin, still "do not thereby deny that this inclination does not correspond to God's original design for humanity and that it is objectively in contradiction to God and remains one's enemy in lifelong struggle." In short, making one point does not necessarily mean denying another, says the Declaration again and again as it considers issues that have historically been sources of division.

A small additional clarifying statement, called the "Annex" and linked to the signing ceremony, makes even a further point. It recalls the common biblical and liturgical heritage that allows Roman Catholics as well as Lutherans "together" to "understand the Christian as *simul iustus et peccator* (at the same time righteous and sinner)." This official "Annex" was issued in response to complaints about the Declaration from some German Lutheran theologians and from an earlier Vatican "Clarifications." The "Annex" allowed the churches to reach back into shared ancient faith foundations that precede the more recent divisions of the last five centuries.

The Declaration is respectful of the condemnations from the past. Nothing is taken away from their "seriousness," it says, and they remain for both churches today "salutary warnings."

But the focus of the Joint Declaration is on the present and the future. Because the partners have experienced the "necessary purification of past memories" called for by Pope John Paul II in *Ut unum sint*, they now see each other in a new light. The agreement clears the air and the deck for joint evangelization about God's graciousness. In an achievement-based society like ours, the proclamation of God's gracious mercy will be even better news now that Lutherans and Roman Catholics can avoid condemning each other to proclaim it. □

Margaret O'Gara *is a Roman Catholic professor of theology at the Faculty of Theology in the University of Saint Michael's College, Toronto, a member of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic International Commission on Unity, and the author of* The Ecumenical Gift Exchange *(Liturgical Press, 1998).*

Dennis O'Brien

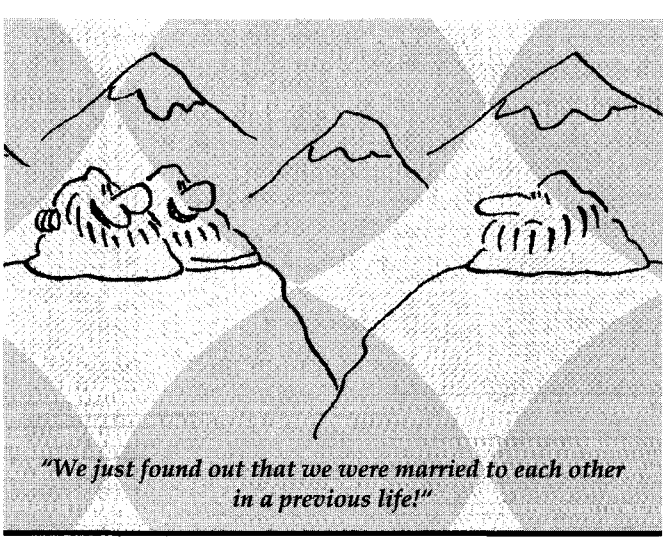
GAY MARRIAGE?

Vermont must decide

On December 21, 1999, the eve of the shortest day of the year, the Vermont Supreme Court handed down a ruling on the vexed matter of "gay marriage." Whether that ruling will cast as short a light on this issue as the winter solstice remains to be seen. The court rejected the claim of the gay plaintiffs that denying them a marriage license was a violation of Vermont law. On the other hand, it granted that same-sex couples were entitled to all the civil benefits extended to married households. Legislation to affirm these entitlements was left to the Vermont legislature. Whether one would encompass this protection under the label of "marriage"or under some category such as "domestic partnership"was not best decided by judicial fiat.

The ruling has been hailed and condemned by both sides of the gay-marriage issue. Gay advocates were gratified by the recognition of equal benefits but vowed to press for recognition of gay marriage. The Catholic bishop of Burlington, Kenneth Angell, regretted the ruling but took comfort in the fact that the court had not legalized gay marriage. Where does the Vermont ruling leave the national debate on gay marriage? I believe that the majority opinion, written by the Chief Justice Jeffrey L. Amestoy, is a model of judicial prudence worthy of national attention.

The plaintiffs argued that the purpose of marriage was to "protect and encourage the union of committed couples." The court rejected that broad construction of "marriage." The chief justice began his opinion by noting that by common definition (*Webster's Dictionary*) "marriage" is the union of one man and one woman as man and wife. When Vermont law specifies that the town clerk may issue a license to either



"We just found out that we were married to each other in a previous life!"

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the "bride"or "groom" it is clear that the legislature had gender in mind.

It is far from clear that limiting marriage to opposite-sex couples violates the Legislature's "intent and spirit." Rather, the evidence demonstrates a clear legislative assumption that marriage under our statutory scheme consists of a union between a man and a woman.

Having rejected any claim to marriage under Vermont statutes, the court then turned to the constitutional question. Plaintiffs argued that refusal to grant a marriage license violated their right to "common benefit and protection of the law guaranteed by Chapter I, article 7 of the Vermont Constitution." Denying access to a civil marriage license excludes couples from an array of legal benefits "incident to the marital relation": access to spouse's medical, life, and disability insurance, etc. On the basis of this "Common Benefit"clause in the Vermont Constitution, the court ruled that gay couples were entitled to the benefits "incident on the marital relation."

Will such a Solomonic slice across the gay-marriage issue become a national precedent? Perhaps, but one should recognize that it stems from the unique character of the Vermont Constitution. This point was elegantly detailed in the chief justice's opinion. The Vermont Constitution dates from 1777 when Vermont was an independent republic. The Vermont fundamental law has a cast not reflected in the U.S. Constitution. The "Common Benefits"provision contains striking language: "[G]overnment is, or ought to be, instituted for the common benefit, protection, and security of the people...and not for the particular emolument or advantage of any single man, family, or set of men...."

The majority opinion calls attention to the difference between the affirmative language of "common benefit"and the "equal protection" language of the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. In the latter case, one seeks remedy against denial and discrimination; in the Vermont case one envisages a positive mandate of government to provide common benefits.

Justice Amestoy then offers some historical background to establish the spirit embedded in the Vermont Constitution. He notes that the American Revolution was not only a protest against British rule, it was also an internal protest against any "entrenched clique favored by birth or social connections." This powerful movement for "social equivalence" was, as historians have characterized it, "the revolution inside the revolution." The Vermont Constitution was "the most radical constitution of the revolution."

Given the positive thrust of the common-benefits language, it was not difficult for the court to conclude that gay couples should have the common benefits of "couples," as the constitution reads, "common benefits...are not for the particular...advantage of any single man, family, or set of men." The court stopped short of specifying the statutory language which would authorize specific kinds of "couples" ("sets of men") for a share in common benefits. "Marriage" is a statutory establishment of one sort of "couple" entitled to certain benefits. It need not be the only possible designation. The court noted that legally defined "domestic partnership" or "registered partnership"could instantiate the common benefits provisions. The choice of statutory language, "marriage" or "domestic partnership," was left to the proper statutory authority, the State Legislature. The court offered the proviso that if the Legislature fails to incorporate the intent of the Vermont Constitution into statute, the gay plaintiffs could return to the court for relief.

Associate Justice Denise Johnson dissented from the majority opinion on the ground that the court should have reached its own conclusion on the issue of "marriage" and granted injunctive relief to the plaintiffs. Johnson argued that the Court had "abdicated its constitutional duty to decide." Chief Justice Amestoy spent considerable effort in his opinion to counter his colleague's dissent: "[T]he dissenting opinion confuses decisiveness with wisdom and judicial authority with finality....No court has ever been more decisive than the United States Supreme Court in *Dred Scott*. Nor more wrong....[I]t was a profound understanding of law and the 'unruliness of the human condition' that prompted Abraham Lincoln to respond that the Court does not issue Holy Writ....[J]udical authority is not ultimate authority.

"It is certainly not the only repository of wisdom. When a democracy is in moral flux, courts may not have the best or the final answers. Judicial answers may be wrong. They may be counterproductive even if they are right. Courts do best by proceeding in a way that is catalytic rather than preclusive and that is closely attuned to the fact that courts are participants in the system of democratic deliberation."

What would have been the outcome of the abortion debate had the U.S. Supreme Court operated under such a caveat, understanding the Court as a catalyst and participant in democratic deliberation along with the legislative bodies?

In the final paragraphs, the chief justice notes wistfully that in seeking marriage status, gay couples may (given divorce statistics) be expressing the triumph of "hope over experience."

Gay marriage in the eyes of its advocates presumably would express moral or cultural parity with traditional hetero-sexual marriage. Whether the law can or should deal with such "spiritual" concerns is doubtful. Personally, I think that the "domestic partnership" suggestion is appropriate. In fact, I believe that the law should move beyond homosexual or heterosexual "partnerships." Why should access to "common benefits" be based on a putative sexual connection? Two brothers or sisters, same- or opposite-sex couples who nonsexually enjoyed one another's companionship might well desire to act as domestic partners and accrue the appropriate benefits.

Vermont may have the most revolutionary constitution in the land; as applied in this case, it may offer wisdom even for the sexual revolution. □

Dennis O'Brien *is president emeritus of the University of Rochester. He lives in Vermont.*

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ISRAEL & PALESTINE

An unequal struggle

Robert G. Hoyt

On a recent (November) visit to Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth, Hebron, Tiberias, Ramallah, and other points in Israel and the West Bank, I heard it said that a reporter who spends a week on such a tour can write a book on his return. If you stay a month, you may be able to do an article. A year, and you get a major case of writer's block. Too much complexity, too many contradictions.

Well, I arrived on a Saturday and left on the following Saturday (starting at 2:30 A.M.!), and I could indeed write a book, but only by making unashamed use of all the handouts from various sources that I picked up or were thrust upon me. It might even be a pretty good book, but partisan: All the handouts were pro-Palestinian. So was the sponsor of the tour, the American Committee on Jerusalem, founded and run by Arab-Americans, their answer to the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee. And so also most of my companions on the tour: a writer from *Sojourners* magazine, a TV reporter/producer from PBS's "Religion and Ethics Newsweekly," an editor of the *Christian Century*, complete with spouse, a reporter from the Voice of America, an Arab-American retiree from the U.S. State Department, and a former engineer who spends his retirement organizing in Chicago-area churches on behalf of a shared Jerusalem. A most congenial group. Most of us talked mostly or exclusively with Palestinian sources: among others, the grand mufti of Jerusalem, a representative of the Latin patriarchate, a Lutheran bishop, the minister for tourism of the Palestine Authority (PA), the editor of the largest Arabic-language daily in the region (based in Nazareth), the pastor of a Catholic parish in Bir Zeit, an Israeli-Arab member of the Knesset, a Jordanian author/journalist often seen on network news shows in the United States. We were free to make our own contacts with Israeli sources; but, I have to confess, I didn't.

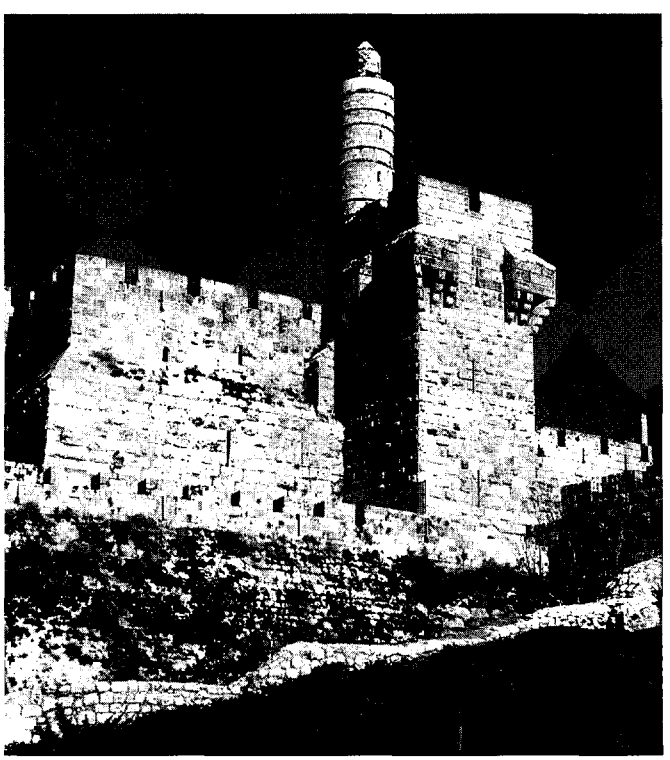
To complete this acknowledgment I will mention that I was pro-Israel during and after the 1948 conflict, known to Israelis as the War of Independence, to Palestinians as the Disaster, and also during and after the Six-Day War of 1967. My bias suffered a switch during my first visit to the Middle East thirty (yes, *thirty*) years ago. It was a moving and at times enraging experience. So now you know where I'm coming from, and some of you may wish to stop reading.

Robert G. Hoyt *is* Commonweal*'s senior writer.*

Here are some of my 1999 observations:

The Holy Land is a hilly land. The holier the hillier—or so I felt—after our first-day walking-walking-walking tour of the Old City, site of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Via Dolorosa, the Western Wall, and the Dome of the Rock, among other sacred sites. For me it was not a wholly edifying experience, because of new evidence that while my left leg, along with the rest of me, is a mere seventy-seven years old, my right leg is ninety-four and aging fast. I was the group laggard.

In my eyes, and those of partisans on all sides—Jews, Muslims, Christians, in all their varieties—the Old City *is* Jerusalem. That is a principal (not the only) reason why Israel annexed it from Jordan, along with all of East Jerusalem, after the 1967 war; why Palestinians reject Israel's action as unjust and contrary to the law of nations; and why the status of East Jerusalem will be a major sticking point in the "final negotiations," if they ever get final. It is not cynical but realistic to conclude that a major factor in the struggle for control over Jerusalem and other hallowed places is revenue from tourism, in dollars, euros, pounds, francs, deutschemarks,



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etc. We were told that tour groups led by Israeli guides are warned that it's not safe to stay in Palestinian-controlled areas (not so, in our collective experience; two young women in our group walked anywhere they liked, night or day, feeling secure), and/or that accommodations are inferior (true, they're not posh, but our hotel, the Meridian, was clean, comfortable, and well-run (free plug). We weren't told, but I'd be willing to bet half the farm that very different advice comes from guides with Palestinian ties.

That's a minor matter. Some others that I found more significant:

- **Greenery.** There's a lot of it in West Jerusalem and other areas where Israeli Jews are dominant, not much in areas controlled or populated by Palestinians. It has nothing to do with tastes in landscaping, and everything to do with who controls the water.
- **Access.** Our big yellow GMC van, owned and operated by an Arab with Israeli citizenship, had yellow license plates, so that we breezed through most checkpoints; when we were stopped the interrogation was brief. It would have been more intense if our plates had been white or green, denoting residence in Gaza or the West Bank. An Arab living in, say, Ramallah, who wants to go to Jerusalem to worship in the al-Aksa Mosque, Islam's third-holiest site, or to visit his ailing mother, needs a permit. They're hard to get.
- **Housing demolitions.** You're a Palestinian holding proper title to a piece of land in East Jerusalem. You request a permit to build a house. It's costly if you get it, but in most cases it doesn't come, doesn't come, doesn't come; so you decide to build the house anyway. You receive a notice saying that the house is illegal and is slated for demolition. That may happen in two weeks or not for two years. When it does happen and the timing is known, volunteers from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) may arrive to protest by lying in front of the bulldozers. They are dragged away, and the demolition proceeds. If you're desperate enough and have the means, you may choose to rebuild on the site, and the scenario may be repeated.
- **Settlements.** They're everywhere on the West Bank, or so it seemed, recognizable for their unvarying, unadorned, uninspired architecture. Our sources claimed that Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak has betrayed campaign promises by stopping construction on only a few nascent settlements, little more than camps, while encouraging continued expansion of established settlements. We saw ongoing construction work in some of the latter. (Early in December, Barak announced a moratorium on new construction in existing settlements, citing the Palestinian protests that became familiar to us.)
- **Refugees.** We toured a camp, some of whose resident families have lived there for decades. It wasn't a tent city, like the one I visited, nervously, thirty years ago, but the buildings were jammed together and decrepit, the streets between them unpaved and dusty. It was slummy and depressing. But the kids seemed healthy. Out of compassion for my leg I opted out of part of the tour, and sat by the side of the road, where children five to seven years old gathered to stare at me (maybe it's the beard) and to play with me. But later, as I trudged toward the entrance, a group of older boys, ten to thirteen, gathered around me insistently (and angrily?) demanding shekels. I was reminded of *Lord of the Flies*. Fortunately, the engineer in our party, who is six-feet-three-inches and somatically well endowed, hove into sight, and the kids gave up.
- **Refugees (2).** Respected Israeli historians, along with other scholars, have deconstructed the myth that all the Arabs who left their homes in what is now Israel left voluntarily in the 1948 war, urged on by broadcasts from Arab capitals. There were no such broadcasts. Israeli army units committed atrocities and forced expulsions in Arab villages, and reports of these were purposefully used to spread terror among Arabs elsewhere. But, in the public mind, particularly in the United States, revisionist history hasn't caught up with the realities of the past. Predictably, our sources did not dwell upon, or mention, the murderous tactics used by irredentist Palestinians against their purported oppressors, mostly civilians, some of them babies, for the militarily unachievable, politically stupid, morally unjustified aim of driving the Israelis into the Mediterranean. Regardless of provocations, of which there have been plenty, that's not forgivable. But Arab use of terrorism isn't news to anyone who's read the American press over the past half-century.
- **The maps.** In the peace process negotiations, the Palestinian Authority holds at best a pair of treys and a couple of jacks; Israel's hand makes up a royal flush. It's a slingless David against a wealthy and well-armed Goliath. (The Arab countries are not at the table; at best, they're kibitzers.) That's why Israeli maps of the future Palestine show an area dotted with settlements connected by bypass roads, and demonstrate why the "concessions" made to the Palestinians constitute what are essentially Bantustans, carefully segregated one from another. Building a governable nation and a viable economy on such a base asks miracles. One can understand why today's Israeli governments don't want to help give birth to a unified, potentially prosperous Arab state

It's a slingless David against a wealthy and well-armed Goliath....Israeli maps of the future Palestine show an area dotted with settlements connected by bypass roads, and demonstrate why the "concessions" made to the Palestinians constitute what are essentially Bantustans.

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next to Israel's borders. But one can still believe they're making a historic mistake.

• **The U.S. role.** Dennis Ross, special U.S. envoy to the Mideast, arriving in Israel during our stay, declined to take a position in the then-current impasse between the two sides over whether Israel alone or the two sides together should determine the size and placement of the areas to be handed over by Israel in its next redeployment. That sounds like an admirably even-handed position for an honest broker. It would be a lot more so if, *per impossibile*, the Palestinian Authority got anything like the billions of U.S. foreign aid annually transferred to Tel Aviv.

• **Nazareth.** You've probably read or heard about the squabbles over the building of a mosque close to the Church of the Annunciation. Both Christian and Muslim sources said the flare-up in Nazareth was an aberration, that the two groups get along famously, and that the Israeli authorities, acting on the ancient Roman strategy, *divide et impera*, deliberately inflamed the situation. Could be true, but I didn't think they proved their case. An American journalist long resident in the region couldn't address the Nazareth to-do but cast large doubt on the happy picture of peaceful ecumenical relations between Christians and Muslims; the militants among the latter, he said, often give Christians a bad time.

• **The future.** So what's going to happen? Damifino. Damifanybodynoes. Our most optimistic source was our Jordanian guru, a cultivated and convincing cosmopolite; he cited polls showing strong majorities among both peoples favoring continuation of the peace process, and he detects a gradual shift in Israeli public opinion toward a more benign view of Palestinian aspirations. A reporter for *Ha'aretz*, Israel's leading daily, who writes solely and sympathetically about the Palestinians, says she gets almost no feedback from her readers, no matter what she writes; she thinks Israelis are ill-informed about and mostly indifferent to the situation of their cousins. The Catholic pastor in Bir Zeit said the dominant mood among his people is not revolutionary fervor but apathy and disillusionment, accounting for the dwindling number of Christians in the Holy Land, where they're already a tiny minority. A number of our interlocutors, maybe most of them, reported growing Arab anger not only toward Ehud Barak (he's not Benjamin Netanyahu, but neither is he Yitzhak Rabin) but also toward Yasser Arafat, who's seen as all too willing to give away the store to the Israelis and as anything but democratic in his governance of the Palestinian Authority.

People ask me if I think things have changed greatly over the past three decades. Well, yes. Bethlehem is one big construction site, in preparation for the millennial tourists. I sensed less passion, less wild dreaming, among the Arabs, somewhat more fairness in the Israeli press. I'd love to go back in another thirty years and find greenery flourishing everywhere, along with universal peace and harmony. But, for personal and political reasons, I think that's about as likely as a reversal of the aging process in my right leg. □

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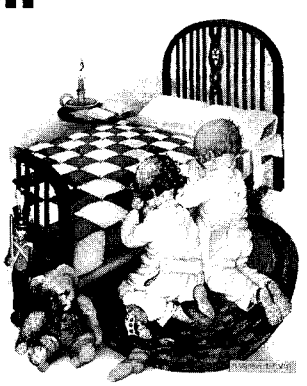

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CONFRONTING THE CHURCH'S PAST

An interview with Eamon Duffy

Raymond de Souza

Eamon Duffy, professor in church history at the University of Cambridge, is one of the leading contemporary historians of the church. His landmark book, The Stripping of the Altars *(Yale) challenged the reigning Protestant account of the English Reformation. He also authored a highly acclaimed book on papal history,* Saints and Sinners *(Yale). He was invited by the Vatican last fall to participate in the symposium examining the history of the Inquisition. Raymond de Souza spoke with Duffy in his office at Magdalene College in Cambridge, England.*

■ RAYMOND DE SOUZA: Is there a specifically Christian way of doing the work of a historian?

■ EAMON DUFFY: I do not think there is a Christian shape to history in the sense that things move according to God's plan in any discernible way. I think a Christian approaches history with a sense that human life matters and has meaning and that it is both possible and important to tell the truth. Perhaps that constitutes a Christian approach to history because none of those things can be taken for granted now, even among people practicing history. There are people who practice history who think that it is a branch of the creative arts in the sense that we impose patterns on the past. I believe that we discover patterns in the past.

■ DE SOUZA: Would that make Christians better historians?

■ DUFFY: I do not think Christians are necessarily better historians or more truthful historians than other people. Some Christian historians have been shabby workmen and rather economical with the truth. In England, for example, Cardinal Francis Aidan Gasquet, a great Benedictine historian, was both a bad workman and not entirely scrupulous about what he said. So you can be a churchman and a lousy historian. There are perfectly good secular historians who have all the virtues that I have said I thought a Christian ought to practice. I suppose a Christian also comes to the past equipped with a certain set of assumptions about the way human beings behave, why they behave in particular ways, and with a set of prejudices and ideas which are a result of one's own religious formation. That used to be thought disabling in a historian—to have a point of view, to have a prejudice or a set of expectations. In fact, all historians, whether they are Christians or not, have a point of view, have a set of prejudices. The important thing is to know what you have got and to use it as a tool, not as a fortress wall.

In my own area, for example, in the history of the Reformation, I came to the Reformation period with an acquired understanding of how the Catholic religion functions as a symbol system. I did not think of religious ritual, for example, as meaningless mumbo jumbo. I was, therefore, able to read aspects of the pre-Reformation and Reformation period that did not make sense to colleagues who did not share that formation. No doubt, I have blind spots and cannot see things that somebody with a prejudice against the Catholic church might be more alert to. We have to work with the grain of our own inheritance.

■ DE SOUZA: Is that what explains why your book, *The Stripping of the Altars*, challenged the standard telling of the English Reformation?

■ DUFFY: The legacy of Protestant Christians writing the history of the Reformation was that it was seen as the story of the restoration of true Christianity after a period of corruption. Many of the historians who practiced Reformation history were not Protestants, in the sense that they were not believers, but they inherited a Whig view of the Reformation as a stage in modernity—in the liberation of the human mind from superstition and prejudice—and so they worked with a whole set of assumptions about what must have happened. The Reformation must have been popular because it was true and therefore they never looked for evidence to see actually whether or not it was popular.

"Well, after two thousand years, you have to expect a few schisms..."

Raymond de Souza *is a seminarian for the Archdiocese of Kingston, Ontario, studying at the North American College in Rome.*

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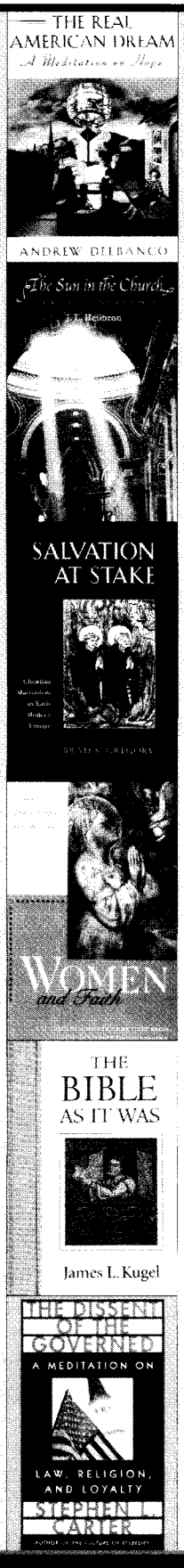

The Real American Dream

A MEDITATION ON HOPE

Andrew Delbanco

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Whales

"The whales got too big and had to go back into the water."
A mother to her child, overheard at a museum

Even when we no longer ran,
for years, the hills
comforted, the pine-wood
brushed our broad, bony paws.
Sun kneaded the hair along
our spine, and rain
combed it warm and
easy under the dawn.
Each taste of living food,

quick and hot, was strength
and daylight was a giant room.
Bird shadow whispered across our eyelids
and slow voles flattened
under the browse
of our jowls. It could not
bear, the grass, the rain-brushed
soil. Night was threadbare,

wearing thin, wearing through.
One more afternoon, we prayed,
one more sunrise.
Gravel parted hard
beneath our plowing
preludes, voice to voice.
And when the weariness began
we could not name it, we

who had coursed over
the hill, plunged valley,
tossed free in the cold
morning light. Years since we had
danced, we thought: we are dancers.
Until we could not pretend, until the stone

sky pressed, and each breath hauled a
quarry in, and pushed it out again,
each heartbeat the grinding of ore
on ore. Such rooted
exhaustion we could not lift
a song. Nosing the tang of foam-spume,

shivering, chest to surf.
We were tongues. We were wet
as eyes. No one would know
us, we would have no name.
Without a star we drank
the black salt. And began.

Michael Cadnum

One of the things that happened in English Reformation history over the last fifteen or twenty years has been the discovery—which is not a terribly surprising discovery—that most people were religiously conservative and did not like what was happening. That simple discovery, which has been endlessly endorsed by local studies, has completely shifted perceptions of the Reformation. The Reformation is now seen not as a popular movement which quickly took effect but as something that had to be labored for over a couple or even three generations and which was largely driven by elite and governmental power. I would not want to argue that Catholicism is the superior article in every culture and is always popular while Protestantism is always unpopular. That is patently not always the case, but in England that was the case.

■ **DE SOUZA:** Should a church historian see his work as part of the intellectual work of the church, akin to the vocation of a theologian?

■ **DUFFY:** I would be very suspicious, myself, of historians who thought it was their primary job to vindicate the Catholic religion. I think they would be tempted to massage the past into a particular form. I think it is the historian's job to tell the truth and if the truth goes against the church then so be it. It is more important to tell the truth than to protect the church. I am a Catholic so I think that more often than not the truth is no threat to the church. That is not always true. Remember that the church is human history in a particular mode.

■ **DE SOUZA:** What is the role of church historians with the preparation of the church's examination of conscience in the view of the Jubilee?

■ **DUFFY:** One of the problems about Catholic ecclesiology in the past has been the identification of the historical phenomenon of Catholicism with the bride of Christ who is spotless and pure. The strict identification of the historical community with the mystical bride of Christ has had all sorts of effects. It means that, for example, we never make mistakes and the Catholic church has worked on this assumption at every level of its life—from the doctrinal to the practical—that we never make mistakes. It is felt that we must automatically, for example, defend Pius XII against charges that he was anti-Semitic. We must find extenuating circumstances for atrocities, for moral lapses in the past, for bad teaching in the past; I think historians have the great responsibility of bringing home to the church that it is a historical community made up of fallible people and that therefore the past of the church is not a sacred area. It is an area where we believe that the grace of God is working itself out in history but that does not privilege our history as different from other human history. The grace of God is working itself out in all human history and very often the gospel is focused in the church by its absence rather than by its effectiveness in the community.

■ **DE SOUZA:** Is there then an inevitable tension between historians and the church hierarchy?

■ **DUFFY:** The historian has a great contribution to make in

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reminding the church of what actually happened and refusing to allow anyone, particularly the hierarchy, to sanitize it. The hierarchy is always looking, not in any malevolent sense, to the past to justify its own actions. It is very important that if the church goes to the past, then it should be the real past it goes to and not some fantasy or some heritage past that has been manicured and tidied up. It was interesting that among the historians called to the Inquisition symposium there were a large number of Catholics but also atheists, Jews, Protestants, and agnostics, because the Holy See recognized that you had to go to the people who knew the history. The primary qualification of the historians there was that they should be good historians, and not that they should be believers.

Some of the most telling interventions came from people who were non-Catholics and they were often extremely friendly. Indeed, one of the non-Catholic participants said that if he had been a sixteenth-century heretic he would have much rather been tried by the Inquisition than by any secular court. But there were also those who disagreed with that.

■ **DE SOUZA:** What is your view of the call for a "purification of memory" as a preparation for the Jubilee, by confessing the sins of the past?

■ **DUFFY:** I think the idea of "purification of memory" can be a dangerous concept. The idea of apologizing for the past and starting with a clean sheet in the third millennium—you cannot start with a clean sheet. You carry with you what you have done. People can forgive but the dead cannot forgive. There is a danger of thinking that if you say what you have done—that is it, it is finished. I am dubious about that.

One of the Jewish historians at the Inquisition symposium made a devastating intervention when talking about the church asking forgiveness. He said, "I don't believe in forgiveness. I don't believe in God. I don't believe there is anyone to forgive us. In any case, I think when people ask for forgiveness they are very often asking to be let off. What I did not hear the pope say and what I have not heard any of you say is that the church is ashamed of what it did." He got an ovation for that. Everybody felt he had said a true thing.

■ **DE SOUZA:** What is the value then of this historical examination of conscience?

■ **DUFFY:** I think it is important. People do take note when the church admits that it got things wrong. There is a theological problem here which the theologians at the symposium were very conscious of and which is implicit in the relevant sections of the pope's apostolic letter on the millennium, where he says that the church must face up to its past and must admit that its children often got things wrong. All of us, Catholics and non-Catholics alike, at the Inquisition symposium felt that this was an evasion.

Some of the theologians, for example, wanted us to say that the church had done terrible things and murdered people for their beliefs in the past but that was not the magisterium. But the Inquisition was an arm of the papacy, and it was the uniform teaching of the church for a thousand years that heretics should be punished physically. And the church got that wrong. That teaching—which was practical teaching, if not doctrinal teaching—is contrary to the teaching of Vatican II. The church changed its mind about this in 1965 and there is no escaping it. It really frightens the theologians to say that, because the church cannot change its mind. There is a fear that, if we say that the church changed its mind, then Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre was right and the Second Vatican Council was apostasy. But that cannot be true. That is a problem for the theologians, not for the historians. The historians can all see that the church has actually changed its mind.

It is very, very awkward but you have to live with the awkwardness. I think we have to be able and willing to say with integrity that the church was wrong. I think that historical work has serious implications for theology. People will think less of a theology that does not confront history truthfully. If our account of the magisterium is such that it cannot take account of facts that everybody can see, then it is the theology that must change, not the history. We must not put ourselves in the theological position of saying, "It is better not to believe the historians." If your theology cannot face the truth, then it's not itself telling the truth. It just means that we've got it wrong and have to go back and rethink. I don't want to hammer that point, but this is an area where theologians are clearly having a problem at the moment with facing up to a changed perception of history.

■ **DE SOUZA:** If these theological dangers are on the horizon...

■ **DUFFY:** Dangers? I don't think that they are dangers, just difficulties for the theologians!

■ **DE SOUZA:** Given these theological difficulties, why do you think that the Vatican desires this examination of history?

■ **DUFFY:** I think it is largely the Holy Father's initiative. I think Poles have a very strong sense of the meaning of dates and anniversaries and so on. The Jubilee looms very large in the pope's sensibility. It is impossible not to feel when you meet him that he is keeping himself going just so that he survives into the new millennium. So I do think it is very largely driven by the pope, but I think most of us also feel some symbolic resonance there.

In this century the church has made a great leap into seeing itself as voyaging through time. I love that phrase in the third Eucharistic Prayer, *ecclesia peregrinantem in terra*—a pilgrim church on earth. The church is facing up to the truth that it is a pilgrim people and therefore it falls on the road, that it wanders and loses its way. I think that the Jubilee is gathering all that up and the idea of presenting our very mottled history to God and saying we know we made a mess of it but you can heal it—that's a very powerful and evangelical thing. But is must not involve laundering the past. The purification of the memory must not involve the laundering of the memory. I certainly do not think that is the pope's wish. It is very good that the church can say, "We have sinned." □

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Richard Alleva

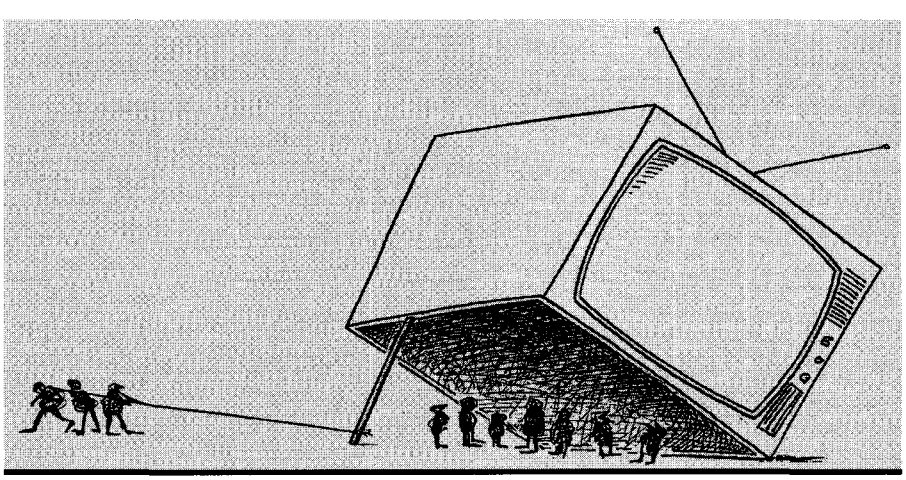
WHERE THERE'S SMOKE

Michael Mann's 'The Insider'

Here's a scenario for you. A patriotic American discovers that a mighty and paranoid superpower is trying to undermine the health of this country, even to the point of turning many of us into addicts. But our hero also discovers that there is a weak link in the superpower's central bureaucracy, someone who, out of basic human decency, is willing to be a "mole" and release his employer's plan to the media. Political expediency suspends the revelation and puts the mole's existence in peril. But our hero finally gets the news out and rescues both the mole and the American people. The superpower still exists to do mischief in the future but at least it has been stymied.

No, this is not the latest James Bond thriller. It's a true story that you may already know if you've watched "60 Minutes" in the last few years, and it's now been dramatized and slightly fictionalized in Michael Mann's *The Insider*. The pernicious superpower isn't Russia or China or Iran; it's Brown & Williamson, an American corporation that makes cigarettes and may have added a chemical substance to its product to make nicotine more addictive. The mole is Jeffrey Wigand, a scientific researcher and vice-president of B&W who was fired for criticizing the additive and who, infuriated by the secrecy agreements he was forced to sign before departing, becomes a whistle blower. And our hero is the "60 Minutes" producer, Lowell Bergman, who first solicits Wigand's apostasy and then rescues his information from limbo when corporation politics (CBS's fear of a lawsuit) leads "60 Minutes" to emasculate Wigand's crucial interview with Mike Wallace.

The Insider fits snugly enough into the category of journalistic thriller-exposé but, as I tried to suggest above, it's also something of an espionage drama, an *industrial* espionage thriller with agents of CBS (Bergman, Wallace) pitted against agents of B&W (corporate lawyers and, if we are to believe Wigand, anonymous thugs). Not the least *frisson* of this always compelling movie is the way it plays on the fears of even those of us willing to give two cheers for capitalism that an American business eliciting money from customers won't hesitate to kill some of those same customers to make a bigger profit. When John le Carré, after the dismantling of the Berlin Wall in 1989, suggested that the industrial espionage novel might succeed the cold-war thriller genre, I thought this could be a hazardous development since it might entail the loss of moral stakes. In a tale pitting two corporations against each other with only profit at risk, what reader or viewer would care about the outcome? To my delight, *The Insider* brushes my trepidation aside.



What's interesting aesthetically about *The Insider* is the way it progresses from dimly lighted, claustrophobic, almost Kafkaesque terror to open-air, furiously paced muckraking drama. Wigand is the real protagonist of the first two-thirds, and the texture of the film echoes his fearfulness with scenes that are shadowy, coiled, and conspiratorial. B&W's CEO (played with oozing malice by Michael Gambon) is photographed by Dante Spinotti as a sort of Beria ensconced in a building of shadowy corridors patrolled by security guards who look like the worst thugs ever trained by the KGB. Just let Wigand work on his golf at a driving range and a sinister figure materializes at the adjacent tee, his every perfect shot a mockery of Wigand's nervous flubs. Threats appear on the scientist's e-mail; a bullet is placed in his mailbox. Thus, *The Insider* is tapping into one of the perdurable masochistic pleasures of the traditional spy thriller: We are drenched in a paranoia that may be justified. Furthermore, paranoia isn't just an atmospheric side effect here, but the movie's incitement, its wellspring. If Brown & Williamson hadn't been so paranoid about a "man who knew too much," they wouldn't have (reputedly) threatened him. And when Bergman first approaches Wigand to do a perfectly innocuous technical task for CBS, the scientist's paranoid response alerts the TV producer that this man is a potential mole.

Once the interview is emasculated by CBS and Wigand's life goes into limbo, so does his status as a character, because a character who can no longer affect the central action of a drama is no longer truly dramatic. And so Lowell Bergman takes over the movie and, as he calls up newspaper editors to report the shame of CBS's intimidation, the movie takes on his qualities: extroversion, righteous fury, fearlessness. The keynote image is of Al Pacino as

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Bergman, a sleepless tiger with a cordless phone, pacing back and forth on the beach in back of his house, the ocean roaring behind him, the world of media at his ear, exhortation and petition on his lips. Here is the town crier of the millennium (I swear this is the first and last time I use the M word) taking the drama from darkness to light, from concealment to revelation, from the murk of corporate secrecy to the vibrancy of humane muckraking.

The two lead actors are superb, yet what a difference in the results. Al Pacino, usually an actor with a few too many flourishes for my taste, plays Bergman with immense energy but no frills. By the movie's conclusion, he has convinced us that this journalist is a man who can know himself only through strenuous action, and that we have had a rare occasion to know him well because we have seen him operate at the top of his form.

Russell Crowe as Wigand isn't just Pacino's equal; he actually tops the excellent work he did in *L.A. Confidential*. Yet the result frustrated me because, given the story's limits, we can't really know Jeffrey Wigand. Has an actor ever given so much more information than his script? (I'm not faulting the writing of Mann and Eric Roth. Their aim was to reveal Wigand's part in a scandal, not to plumb the depths of his character.) Crowe reveals Wigand's pride in his scientific ability, but he can't show why it was wasted on behalf of cigarettes. Just for money? The actor perfectly captures the man's depleted love for his wife but can't explain when or why the marriage went sour. And so forth. Wigand, on screen at least, is a man who lives behind a mask of stoicism even when he's quivering inside with rage. Crowe's brilliance is to indicate all sorts of movement under that mask, yet we yearn to peek behind it.

Eric Roth's writing confidently taps into the boardroom, swivel-chair machismo of executives and celebrity broadcasters as in the moment when Mike Wallace (Christopher Plummer) states that going through with the Wigand story might force him to "spend my final days wandering in the wilds

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of PBS." (Daniel Schorr will get a chuckle out of that one.)

Michael Mann's direction holds the wide-ranging story together, giving it the proper measures of panoramic sweep and microscopic intensity, though I wish he had reined in a pretentious musical score that seems to set this entirely American story somewhere in the Middle East.

The tale told is mostly true but is the movie fair? Fair to cigarette manufacturers? Pu-leeze! Fair to Mike Wallace and Don Hewitt (producer of "60 Minutes"), who have complained that they never capitulated to CBS's fears? On this point I plead ignorance, but I must say that Christopher Plummer, a supreme stage actor who at last has a screen role he can sink his thespian incisors into, makes Wallace a gleaming, magnetic prima donna, one whom the audience never sneers at but comes to regard as a lovable monster, almost a nonlethal version of Hannibal Lechter. There are worse ways to be slandered. □

MEDIA

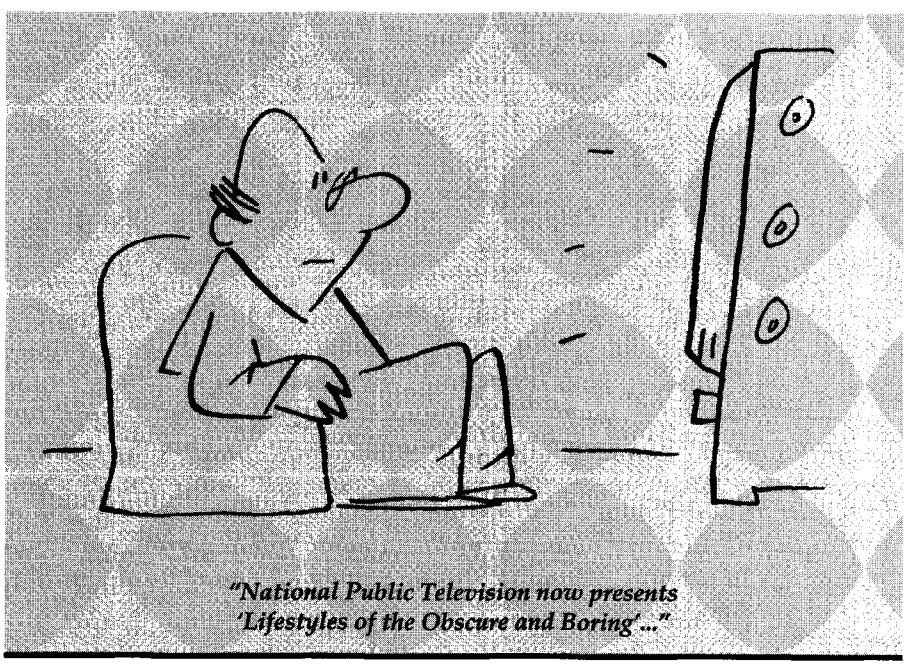
Celia Wren

TAKING ON HOLLYWOOD

'Action' & other fatalities

Back in September, Senator Joseph I. Lieberman (D-Conn.) and William J. Bennett, author of *The Book of Virtues*, held a press conference. The occasion was the presentation of the Silver Sewer Award, an honorific the two-man Morals Squad confers on objectionable cultural programming. This year, the winners were two new offerings from the impudent Fox network: "Get Real" and "Action," a dark Hollywood spoof that hype had crowned, on the eve of its debut, the hottest show of the season.

Hot, in this case, meant scandalous. "Action's" creators might have been aiming deliberately for that Silver Sewer as they crafted the adventures of Peter Dragon (Jay Mohr), an ambitious blond film producer who would score in the negative numbers if there were ever a morals Olympics. Dragon became the kind of can-do executive who, when pressed for a matinee idol, cheerily kidnapped one from a detox program. And he worked and hobnobbed with people as despicable as he was. This scenario provided "Action's" scriptwriters with ample opportunity to deride the movie business. For example, in a plot twist that skewered the widespread practice of product placement (in which companies buy screen time for their brands), Peter signed on to a tobacco-lobby campaign to sell cigarettes to teen-agers—after all, he needed cash to finance *Beverly Hills Gun Club*, Dragon Productions' follow-up to its action release *Slow Torture*.



"National Public Television now presents 'Lifestyles of the Obscure and Boring'..."

The show chronicled such exploits in a style that required an on-screen warning label—"The program is recommended for mature viewers." Each half-hour episode boasted profanity (discreetly bleeped), sexual innuendo ("We all know the erotic effects of reptiles," ran one recent line), gratuitous vulgarity ("I have Harvey Keitel pummeling Winona Ryder's face with a fire iron—it's not a woman's movie!"), and what one might term an anti-P.C. aesthetic ("I'm gayer than a leather piñata!" a character boasted).

The crudeness and ribaldry were, of course, part of a deliberate marketing ploy, designed to tickle palates grown jaded by constant repasts of R-rated movies and cable shows. But the cultural climate that fostered "South Park," Howard Stern, and the urination poster for the latest Adam Sandler movie turned cold on "Action"—the show landed such low Nielsen ratings that Fox took it off the air during the sweeps month of November, and then, after reviving it for a few weeks in early December, canceled it altogether.

Television professionals have attributed "Action's" failure, in part, to its dystopian vision; viewers spurned the show, the logic runs, because it contained not a single sympathetic character with whom they could identify. What makes this turn of events more intriguing, of course, is the fact that dystopian visions of Hollywood have a distinguished history. America's longstanding love-hate relationship with the film industry has produced a stream of movies and novels,

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not to mention nonfiction accounts, about mercenary, unscrupulous doings in Tinseltown. Works like *The Day of the Locust*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Barton Fink*, and *The Player* may not be as unrelievedly sour in tone as "Action," but they are just as firmly bent on exposing the greed, heartlessness, hypocrisy, and minor despotisms that have fueled the motion picture machine. Even the buoyant *Singin' in the Rain* spends some time lampooning movie-star worship before and after that famous Gene Kelly dance with the umbrella.

"We've had movies that are cynical about Hollywood as long as there's been a film industry," notes Mark Crispin Miller, a professor of media studies at NYU. The phenomenon, he believes, springs from that dissatisfaction many of us experience when we contemplate our lives: "People are fascinated by the haves, and are particularly interested in any story that simultaneously celebrates power and wealth, and yet seems to deplore them morally." The luminaries of the film world are, Miller points out, "our version of the aristocracy," and a grim portrait of their lives may please us "because it reassures us that people with all these advantages are really quite miserable."

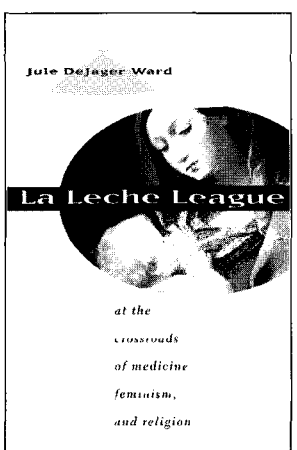
Power and wealth were demonically fascinating long before American film producers colonized Southern California, of course, and Hollywood narratives also resonate more specifically to the wavelengths of our culture. The exploited and compromised writer figures who populate such stories ("Action's" Peter Dragon hounded one scribbler right into a hospital emergency room) embody our misgivings not just about Hollywood's values, but about broader aspects of our society—materialism, competitiveness, and the troubled relationship between art and commerce.

Film's magnificient illusions furnish still more thematic ore, symbolizing mutability, quackery, insincerity, the triumph of style over substance, the cult of the new. In 1932, the acclaimed British stage actress Ethel Barrymore, who spent her last years acting for the camera, said acidly of Hollywood: "The people are unreal. The flowers are unreal, they don't smell. The fruit is unreal, it doesn't taste of anything. The whole place is a glaring, gaudy, nightmarish set, built up in the desert." The remark seems to betray a broader unease with the unrootedness and occasional superficiality of American culture.

A more optimistic comment on these same traits whispers from a marvelous scene in *The Last Tycoon*, F. Scott Fitzgerald's curiously romantic novel about Hollywood. At the beginning of the book, which Fitzgerald left unfinished at the time of his death, a small earthquake has wreaked picturesque damage on the lot of a movie studio. Flooding has turned reality phantasmagoric, and Monroe Stahr, the tycoon of the title, is mesmerized by a surreal image: "On top of a huge head of the Goddess Siva, two women were floating down the current of an impromptu river." The head, which turns out to be a set piece for a Cecil DeMille movie about Burma, represents the kind of Hollywood chimera that Barrymore denounced. But Fitzgerald makes a beautiful illusion: It symbolizes American creativity and the restless energy that is always ready to start afresh.

But this same passage also hints at the deep disillusionment that stokes so many caustic movie-business tales: "Under the moon the back lot was thirty acres of fairyland," Fitzgerald writes, "not because the locations really looked like African jungles and French chateaux and schooners at anchor and Broadway by night, but because they looked like the torn picture books of childhood...." Hollywood speaks to us of lost and squandered opportunity—the kind of opportunity that fades as we leave childhood, make choices, and in doing so narrow our own options. And partly because it is situated on the Pacific coast, where the nation's westward expansion had to come to a halt, the town represents, on some level, opportunities America has lost. We have made Hollywood our dream factory, but we are disappointed with our dreams—disappointed enough to imagine an antihero like Peter Dragon, and too disappointed to watch his escapades on network TV. □

CATHOLICS AND AMERICAN CULTURE



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Everyone called him 'Father'

Under the Rose
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Margaret O'Brien Steinfels

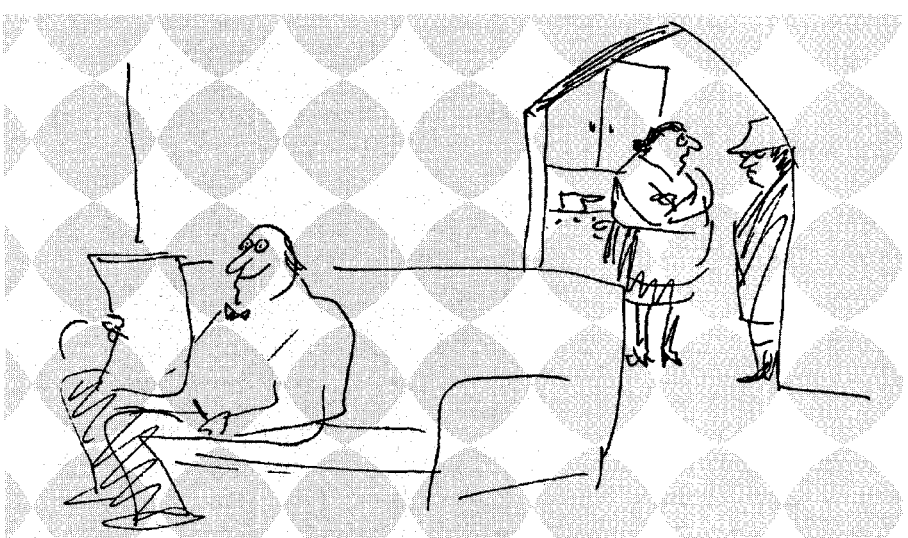
Things happen. Someone writes a version of events and it becomes history's first draft. Even when you have personally watched "things happen," there will be eye openers when you see them in print. The story we have told ourselves (and others) and the version we finally read will have a core resemblance, but then diverge in critically important details. Minor ones come to the fore, new ones appear, while others are lost. Notice how the end has shaped the beginning and how the middle has been designed to link the two. What did happen—really? Isn't this the nut the historian is always trying to crack? Where is the "real" story?

When did the parishioners of Saint Gregory the Great Parish on Manhattan's Upper West Side really know that their pastor, Henry J. Browne, had a secret life across the river in New Jersey? When he resigned in the summer of 1970, the first rumor was that Cardinal Terence Cooke had objected to the arrest of antiwar protestors, Philip Berrigan and Phil Eberhart, in the parish rectory, as well as the raucous events that followed at a Mass the same evening. But not long after Browne's departure, another rumor began to drift out—a family in New Jersey! As time passed, it came to seem as though parishioners, of whom I was one, must have always known that their exuberant and irreverent pastor would have had another life—though the exact facts of this one were unexpected and scandalous. But no, this book says none of us knew. His double life seems to have been a well-kept secret.

Who was Henry J. Browne? First of all, he was a distinguished historian of labor history and archivist at The Catholic University. Second, he was a quintessential Irish-American New Yorker, a flirt, a teller of stories, and a showoff with a bullying manner. His brains, his energy, and his aggression made him a serious scholar, and brought him ultimately to be a good parish priest and a ceaseless community organizer. His childhood poverty made him a ready defender of the poor and his foul mouth was enough to stop an argument midstream. If his slapdash manner while preaching sometimes left his parishioners aghast (had Vatican II really changed things this much?), still he was a pastoral *animator*. He brought vitality to the parish and the neighborhood. And, third, as we learn in this memoir, he was the father of three children and the lover of Flavia Alaya.

Under the Rose (*sub rosa*) is a partial first draft of this history. Saint Gregory's in the 1960s is there and so is Browne's community organizing, but the book's emotional weight lies with Alaya's headstrong flight from a sheltering middle-class, Italian-American family into the passionate embrace of everything her parents cautioned against—and not without reason. Harry Browne and Flavia Alaya met in 1957 as Fulbright scholars in Italy. She was a recent graduate of Barnard College, there to study Mazzini and Croce. Browne, sixteen years her senior, was on the rebound from an unexpected and unexplained ecclesiastical demotion to teaching at the archdiocesan preparatory seminary. He chose research abroad instead.

Their flirtation began with a canceled orientation class in Perugia. It didn't take long for the romantic and restless Alaya to fall into the arms of the engaging Harry Browne and quickly invent a mythic narrative of herself as the priest's concubine. Their scholarly work, hers in Padua, his in Rome, was inter-



"I don't know who he is. He walked in one day and said, 'Honey, I'm home'..."

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rupted by rendezvous up and down the Apennines, here recounted as a combination American musical and bodice ripper. Back in New York, their relationship continues, she living in a small apartment near Saint Gregory's and gingerly participating in his initial efforts to thwart the wholesale destruction of the neighborhood's tenement housing. For the birth of their first-born in 1963, Alaya returns to Italy.

Over the course of the next several years, Alaya moves to New Jersey, has two more children, raises the three, aborts a fourth, finishes a dissertation, becomes a university professor, and carries on the usual housekeeping, neighborhood, and school activities. "A woman's affair with a priest...marks her unconventional path toward independence," so says the publisher, The Feminist Press. They must know!

Browne is back and forth on late-night visits while serving as associate and then pastor of Saint Gregory's, teaching at the seminary, masterminding the Stryker's Bay Neighborhood Council's fight to insure low-income housing, serving the neighborhood's down-and-out, and conducting a successful political and media campaign against New York City's urban renewal plan. Along the way, he becomes a hero to many of his parishioners, neighbors, fellow priests, and Catholic social activists across the country.

Browne is active as well in the anti-war movement, which brings FBI agents to the rectory door. Their surveillance exposes his busy life on both sides of the Hudson River. But by the time Berrigan is arrested at the rectory in April 1970, Browne has already promised Alaya that he will leave the parish and become a family man. Parish rumor had it that the FBI—reputedly all straight-laced Fordham graduates, their chief turns out to have been Browne's seminary classmate—reported these late-night activities to the chancery office, which led to Browne's resignation from Saint Gregory's. Not so, according to Alaya. She says that Cardinal Cooke called Browne to the chancery office more than six weeks later and offered him the chance to continue his priestly work elsewhere. In this telling, the parting between cardinal and priest is wholly amicable. Browne resigned and left Saint Gregory's and more or less went right on doing in Paterson, New Jersey, and at Rutgers University what he had been doing on Manhattan's Upper West Side: organizing, agitating, and teaching.

He was no longer a parish priest, of course, but he went on, as he saw it, with his priestly vocation, including on occasion saying Mass. His stubborn insistence that once a priest always a priest, combined with Alaya's growing feminism, seems to have indefinitely postponed their marrying, and there is no evidence in the book that they ever did tie the knot. Nor is it clear to what degree Browne, though an affectionate father and sometime lover, ever actually settled down to being a family man. By the end of the seventies, Alaya reports a stormy life, including their violent quarrels and his displays of sexual acting out with other women in her presence. In the late seventies, he fell fatally ill with leukemia. He died on November 19, 1980.

What is to be made of Alaya's very long and dramatic story? Her love/hate relationships with Browne, her affection for his priestly colleagues, her sympathy for organizing and politicking, and her own very large sense of herself as a tragic heroine overwhelm any but the most perfunctory attention to the consequences of their double life for the parish or the church, or indeed for themselves and their children.

What finally was Browne's own assessment? What was hers? Alaya reports that at a 1976 bishops' meeting he challenged the church's discipline by asking, "What does the church's stand on celibacy do but endorse concubinage?" On the same page, she sums up their relationship as "this extraordinary banal matter of living together, or trying to." A far cry from an Italian affair that combined high romantic ideals and adolescent subterfuge, their story finally seems not the operatic tragedy Alaya imagines but the sad story of a marriage that never was and a priest who was always a priest.

Among a round of visiting parishioners, I last saw Browne in his New York University hospital room as he was dying, what Alaya dubs, "his comeback on the New York stage." Our visit was brief because he was in deep conversation with Monsignor John Tracy Ellis, the dean of American Catholic historians, and the man, Alaya speculates, who may have been instrumental in having Browne ousted from The Catholic University in the 1950s and sent back to New York. Were they forgiving one another or perhaps, as two historians, puzzling over the church's tumultuous changes of which Browne was so conspicuous an example and agent?

Now three decades into the post-Vatican II evolution of the Catholic church, can we fully understand the assumptions and motives under which American Catholics, and a brilliant man like Browne, were operating in those heady years? If the Latin Mass and fish on Friday could be done away with, why not, many asked, priestly celibacy as well? Widespread expectations foresaw the imminent reintroduction of a married clergy in the Roman church. What harm was there in anticipating those changes? That was the thinking of some priests who left to marry. A very different church seemed in the offing than the one we have arrived at.

How did Browne's double life fit in? Was it in anticipation of a renewed church or a vestige of the hidden practices of the old? Whatever his own no doubt complicated and shifting motives, his former parishioners, including myself, and his confreres in the Catholic social justice world, found it hard to see him go. When he died in 1980, his funeral Mass at Saint Gregory's was a memorable sendoff in the style to which he had accustomed so many. West 90th Street was promptly and grandly renamed Henry J. Browne Boulevard by his political allies, and to this day his bracing pastoral style and his passion for social justice are remembered affectionately and gratefully.

Of this irrepressible soul, only God could be an adequate judge. History is another story. □

Margaret O'Brien Steinfels *is the editor of* Commonweal.

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IS FREEDOM WEALTH?

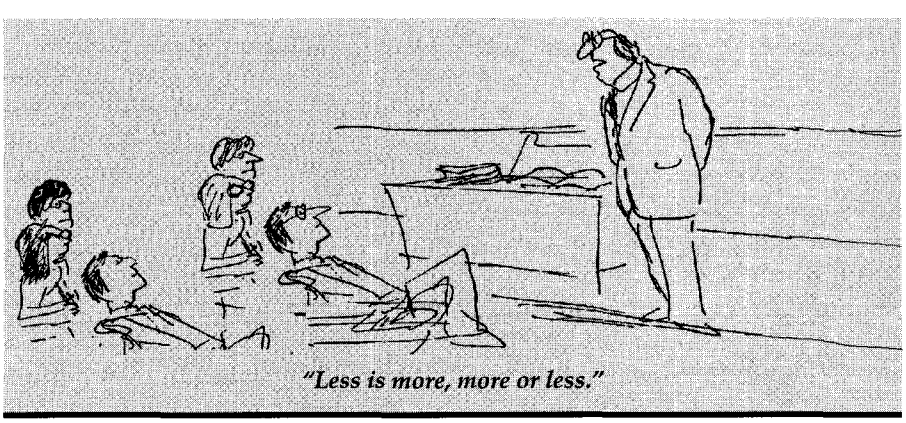
Development as Freedom
Amartya Sen
Alfred A. Knopf, $27.50, 366 pp.

Jay R. Mandle

For many years I have taught courses on economic development. In my classes this subject is fundamentally concerned with the causes and consequences of technological change. The basic story I tell is that a profound gap in levels of economic development exists among nations in the contemporary world. The fundamental determinant of where a country ranks in development is the extent to which its businesses and people have mastered the application of advanced technology to production. The greater the degree of this mastery, the higher the level of economic development. The utilization of advanced technology results in an enhanced ability to produce goods and services and that, in turn, tends to result in improved living conditions.

In my discussion I take care, however, to distinguish between achieving economic development and building what I call a "good society." The latter I describe as one in which members of a country's population possess roughly equal life opportunities and where there is the ability to participate equally in decision making. I note that unfortunately there is no necessary connection between a developed and a good society. Neither historically nor at the present time can it be said that economic development either originates in good societies or necessarily produces them. In the United States, for example, the process of economic development was initiated in an era when slavery was a thriving institution, and today dramatic technological changes are occurring while the distribution of income and wealth in the country becomes increasingly uneven. While I myself do not believe that a good society is possible without taking advantage of advanced technology, it is clear that the latter alone is not enough to ensure a society of justice.

It is this way of presenting development, shared by many economists, that is fundamentally challenged by Amartya Sen in his book *Development as Freedom*. Sen, a Nobel Prize winner, acknowledges that the growth of the gross national product per person, the measure that draws the attention of the economics profession, is important in development. But he is not satisfied with that as a measure of the process. For Sen, the criterion of development used by the economists is unacceptable because it is too narrow. Instead, as the title of his book suggests, he argues that development can be said to occur only when freedom—itself very broadly inclusive of social and economic elements—is advanced.



"Less is more, more or less."

Sen's concept of freedom—and therefore development—includes the avoidance of "starvation, undernourishment, escapable morbidity and premature mortality as well as the freedoms that are associated with being literate and numerate, enjoying political participation and uncensored speech." Only when these "freedoms" advance is development successful. Freedom, according to Sen, should not be thought of either as a means to achieve development nor as an objective to be compromised or deferred in the name of facilitating economic growth. The freedoms that interest him "have to be understood as constitutive parts of the ends of development in themselves." That is, if increasing "freedom" is not integral to the process of social change, development is not occurring.

On the very first page of the book, Sen makes explicit his motivation for reconceptualizing development as freedom. He has a political agenda—in the broadest meaning of that term. Sen writes, "Viewing development in terms of expanding substantive freedoms directs attention to the ends that make development important, rather than merely to some of the means that, *inter alia*, play a prominent part in the process." Development, Sen believes, requires "the removal of major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or overactivity of repressive states." With his approach it would not be possible in the name of development to do something that many development practitioners and theorists do: dismiss as a second-order concern the fact that "despite unprecedented increases in overall opulence, the contemporary world denies elementary freedoms to vast numbers—perhaps even the majority—of people."

Sen's volume is important because it will allow advocates for the poor to employ the work of a Nobel Prize economist in policy debates. In formulating their programs, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, for example, will be told, on Sen's authority, that when they look at a country's eco-

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nomic performance, their evaluation should be judged "primarily by the substantive freedoms that the members of that society enjoy."

Because he provides an enhanced voice for citizens—especially poor people—in an age of globalization in which mammoth corporations seem ever more powerful, I would like nothing more than to agree with Sen that development should be defined as the expansion of human freedom. Agreeing would allow me to achieve a synthesis of my own professional and political concerns that have sought to advance both economic prosperity and political democracy. Since I do not believe that one necessarily implies the other, my constant worry is that I may not be paying enough attention to one when I address the other. That problem is nonexistent in Sen's framework. With his definition, unless both are promoted, neither is.

That said, I confess to not being able to accept Sen's definition of development. I resist because I believe that conflating development and freedom makes it impossible to investigate precisely the problem that animates Sen: why technological change has been only partially liberating. In the United States, for example, a country of undeniable technical prowess, many are denied the kinds of freedom with which Sen is concerned, something that Sen himself documents in his discussion of African-American mortality rates. Correcting that denial of freedom, however, requires that we think analytically about the nature and use of advanced technology and why its positive impact is as constrained as it is. In this, Sen's formulation that "development can be seen...as a process of expanding the freedoms that people enjoy" is not helpful. More nearly the opposite is the case. If as technology advances we are going to extend the scope of freedom, we will have to engage in careful study of the interface between the two. That requires that we conceptualize the two separately, and not as Sen would have it, as "constituent components" of each other. □

Jay R. Mandle *is the W. Bradford Wiley Professor of economics at Colgate University.*

FEW SCOOPS

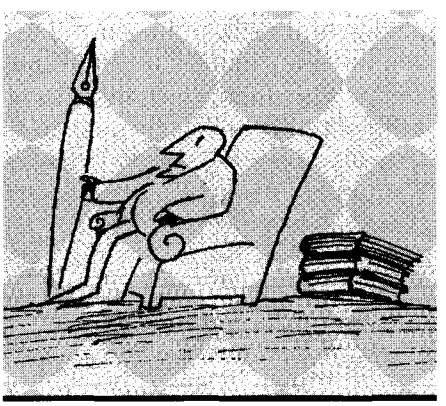
The Complete Stories of Evelyn Waugh
Evelyn Waugh
Little, Brown, $29.95, 536 pp.

Robert Murray Davis

In the 1980s, Auberon Waugh gave permission, on the condition that the result was never to appear in England, to collect and publish what he called scraps from his father's wastebasket in *Evelyn Waugh, Apprentice: The Early Writings, 1910–27*. Now eighteen stories from that volume and twenty-one previously collected and more widely known works of short fiction have been gathered in what is, according to the dust-jacket flap, "a dazzling distillation of Waugh's genius." The publicity release maintains that the stories show that Waugh "was also a master of the short form."

This is an extreme, if not outrageous, claim, but one can agree that these stories are recognizably the work of Evelyn Waugh. Waugh's *persona*, Gilbert Pinfold, believes that "most men harbor the germs of one or two books only; all is professional trickery...." *The Complete Stories* confirms this view.

Those limitations are most noticeable in the recurring characters who people



what an earlier anthologist called "the world of Evelyn Waugh." For example, Alastair Trumpington and Margot Metroland appeared in Waugh's first novel, *Decline and Fall* (1928), and intermittently, in character or cameo parts, in the subsequent novels and some of these stories, until their farewell thirty-five years later in "Basil Seal Rides Again," which collects other characters from the novels *Black Mischief* (1932) and *Put out More Flags* (1942).

More important to careful readers of Waugh's work, three of the stories are direct spinoffs from the novels. "By Special Request" is the ending for the serial version of *A Handful of Dust* (1934), written because key parts of the original ending had already been sold in story form as "The Man Who Liked Dickens." "Incident in Azania," though it uses the setting and some of the characters of *Black Mischief*, was not, from the evidence of the novel's manuscript, ever intended to be part of the longer work but is a kind of *jeu d'esprit* based on a story about a faked kidnapping in China. "Charles Ryder's Schooldays," written and soon abandoned in Waugh's postwar slump and based on his own schoolboy diaries, is a prequel to *Brideshead Revisited* (1945).

Some of the stories are linked to the novels in more subtle ways, for after the fact it is clear that they served as drafts, and sometimes parts' bins, for further and more substantial work to come. The dissolute doctor who fakes a death certificate in Waugh's undergraduate story "Edward of Unique Achievement" is resuscitated for *Decline and Fall*, as is the charming, vacuous young woman from "On Guard" for "Lucy Simmonds." "An Englishman's Home" borrows some of the country dialect from *Scoop* (1938) and anticipates the naive and complacent householders upon whom the awful refugee children are visited in *Put out More Flags*. "Compassion" was clearly a holding action to fix in Waugh's imagination the setting and theme for the climactic scene in the last volume of his

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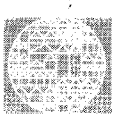

INTRODUCTION BY PETER STEINFELS

In a collection of engaging and provocative essays culled from the magazine that has bridged the gap between Catholic tradition and American modernity, this anthology explores some of the century's most important ethical questions, including:

- **Race and justice, including gay rights**
- **Abortion and euthanasia**
- **Issues of faith, Catholicism and Protestantism, the Church and women**
- **Catholics and Hollywood**
- **And much more**

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final work, the war trilogy *Sword of Honor*, completed a dozen years later.

Perhaps the most interesting links between these stories and one of Waugh's more enduring works are with *A Handful of Dust*. The couple who drift into a low-key adulterous triangle in "Love in the Slump" anticipate the more serious issues confronted in that novel. "The Man Who Liked Dickens" is so tightly connected to the novel that carbon-copy pages of the story were used in the actual manuscript of the novel.

Other ideas must have seemed to Waugh good enough to use in the sauce but not good enough to cellar, age, and bring to the table for later delectation. On occasion he is shameless, as in "A House of Gentlefolks" (1927), when he interrupts the tale of an ingenuous young nobleman whose candor and taste undercut London pretensions with "sometimes...Nature, like a lazy author, will round off abruptly into a short story what she obviously intended to be the opening of a novel" and hurries toward the end. One could forgive the impatience and poverty of a young writer, but Waugh did much the same thing twenty years later in "Scott-King's Modern Europe," where the omniscient author frequently and awkwardly intrudes to account for elisions and suppressions.

Sometimes Waugh could get away with summary instead of scene because, as his novels show, he could abstract and summarize character and situation very well indeed. But in the novels, unlike even fairly successful stories like "On Guard" and "Winner Take All," summary was intermixed with dialogue and action to constitute an effective whole. In the stories, summary too often has to do all the work.

Still, this collection is worth reading for the prose, summary or not. Waugh liked writing in different ways about different things, and he was a master of pastiche: from the debutante argot of "On Guard" through the geopolitical metaphors of the Auden circle in "My Father's House," to the ripe, romantic strains of the opening paragraphs of "Love among the Ruins" (published in its entirety, by the way, in *Commonweal*), and occasionally in phrases and whole descriptions from his own work, as in the description of Basil's young rival in "Basil Seal Rides Again," lifted just short of verbatim from *Black Mischief*.

The real justification for publishing (or reading) this collection is that it may tempt readers, or lead them back, to Waugh's major work. In this collection, in flashes, Waugh's mastery is evident, whether in the early, largely vernacular style or in the enriched, ornate Mandarin in which he immersed himself from the late 1930s to the late 1940s. Waugh had the ability to craft language that seems first startling, then inevitable, as in the description of paintings like "those vague assemblages of picnic litter which used to cover the walls of the Mansard Gallery in the early twenties...." As this phrase shows, style is not just a command of sound and rhythm but of the temper and time of a period. And those qualities ensure Waugh's place in the literature of our century and beyond.

Much stronger evidence to support this view can be found in Douglas Lane Patey's recent biography (*The Life of Evelyn Waugh*, Blackwell), the fourth of Waugh. Christopher Sykes, the first biographer, knew Waugh, but did little research. Martin Stannard presents facts without sympathy in two volumes. Selina Hastings is excellent on the social background and offers some juicy posthumous gossip. But Patey's book is far more thorough and enlightening, not only on Waugh's intellectual background and religious views, but on verbal and structural patterns in the novels. And while students of Waugh will disagree with specific interpretations, wish to correct a few details, and regret that like many Waugh critics Patey is not always able to keep up with Waugh's sense of humor, both old and new readers will be grateful that Patey realizes that his subject was primarily a writer and has a keen appreciation for his command of style. If there is time to read only one biography of Waugh, this is the obvious choice. □

Robert Murray Davis *has written and edited ten books on Waugh, the latest* Mischief in the Sun: The Making and Unmaking of "The Loved One" *(Whitston, 1999).*

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RELIGION BOOKNOTES

Lawrence S. Cunningham

Convened every year at Fordham University's Lincoln Center campus, the *Nostra aetate* dialogues bring together two distinguished scholars, one Christian, one Jewish, to discuss a topic germane to Jewish-Christian relations. This volume provides the papers and discussions from five such dialogues held between 1993 and 1997. The topics, in order, concern the Jewishness of Jesus (John Meier and Shaye Cohen), the Death of Jesus (Raymond Brown and Michael Cook), Catholic-Jewish Dialogue in the coming millennium (Ismar Schorsch and Cardinal John O'Connor), the heavenly and earthly Jerusalem (Michael Fishbane and Robert Wilken), and the late Abraham Heschel (in a special session in which his daughter, Susannah, participated along with Daniel Berrigan and Eugene Borowitz).

No Religion Is an Island:
The Nostra Aetate Dialogues
edited by Edward Bristow
Fordham University Press, $18, 184 pp.

What distinguishes these dialogues from many other interfaith exchanges is that they deal with a tightly focused issue discussed by highly competent scholars at a level that is both serious and accessible. The late Raymond Brown's vast commentary on the Passion narratives (*The Death of the Messiah*) concludes that Jewish authority did play a major role in the execution of Jesus, but that responsibility does not engender blame. Michael Cook did not dispute the scholarly conclusions of Brown, but worried (as did the audience) about the fallout at the popular level if the Passion narratives are not read with nuance. The exchange between Robert Wilken and Michael Fishbane on the meaning of Jerusalem in early Christian and Jewish thought is learned and enlivening. They keep their historical focus despite the almost reflex instinct to ponder the sad fate of Palestinian Christians who, caught between the Israeli state and militant Islam, leave their land in droves.

In general terms, these dialogues are models of how such exchanges should be done: respectful, scholarly, honest, and genuinely enlightening. There is also ample opportunity for the explosion of clichés. John Meier, to cite one instance, observes how overblown is the idea that Paul was the real founder of Christianity. He points out that the gospel writers all had visions of the Christian community without showing the slightest knowledge of the thought or work of Paul.

One can only hope that such exchanges have not ended with the publication of this volume. Rabbi Burton Visotsky, in an opening essay, refers in a jocular manner to the space between the two coasts as the "great, flat Christian heartland." This is one such flatlander who finds that, on occasion, New Yorkers (and their invited guests) have important things to say.

Spirited Lives:
How Nuns Shaped Catholic Culture and American Life: 1836–1920
by Carol K. Coburn and Martha Smith
University of North Carolina Press, $19.95, 327 pp.

In 1920 Catholic nuns maintained about five hundred hospitals in this country, fifty women's colleges, and over six thousand parochial schools. In addition, these sisters (there were roughly ninety thousand of them) administered orphanages, private academies, and homes for the elderly, the handicapped, and unwed mothers. The growth of the Catholic church in the United States was in large part due to the labors of these women who, despite real obstacles from both within and without the church, put a human face on an institution that was the subject of not only suspicion but organized prejudice for most of the previous century.

It is the burden of *Spirited Lives* to tell that story with a focus on one religious community, the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Carondolet. This community began its work early in the nineteenth century when six French nuns arrived in Saint Louis after an extended sea voyage. Within a decade, these women, enriched by some new candidates from the local church, were engaged in education of the deaf, running a small school, and soon taking orphans under their care. From those modest beginnings the sisters began to find new venues for their work. By the 1860s nearly half of the congregation was American-born and their presence was found in Minnesota, upstate New York, and four other states as well as the territory of Arizona.

Separate chapters in this rich work of archival research describe the internal life of the communities as they sought to integrate themselves into a church whose leadership was both masculine and authoritarian. (At times the mother general needed to tell a local pastor that the mission of the nuns did not include clean-

Graham Greene's Fictions
The Virtues of Extremity
Cates Baldridge

The first critical evaluation of Greene's novels since his death in 1991, this innovative study is a reconsideration of Greene's major works, as well as a recasting of his overall worldview.

224 pages, $34.95

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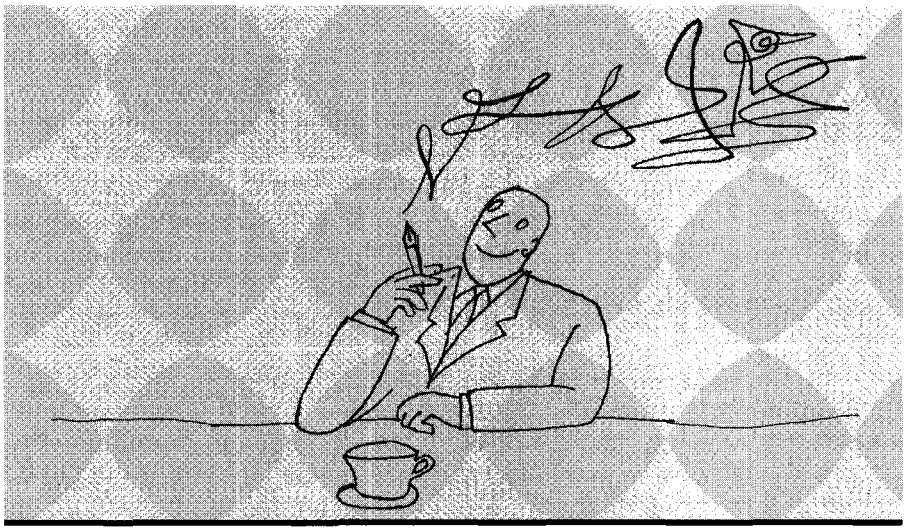

ing his house or cooking his meals.) Frequently the sisters had to raise the monies to augment their meager stipends as parochial school teachers by giving piano lessons, selling handicrafts to raffles, or, when all else failed, begging.

Over and above the rich detail describing the growth of the Carondolet Sisters of Saint Joseph, one appreciates this book for its sensitivity to the social milieu in which these sisters flourished. These women were able to palliate ethnic and class differences by integrating recent European immigrants and native-born women into a single community with a coherent spirituality. Furthermore, they created a locus in which it was possible to become far more educated than many of their contemporaries. They even adopted a public image of recluses shaped by "convent manners" when they were, in fact, highly skilled in negotiating in the largely masculine world of public affairs.

The authors end their story in 1920 for a number of reasons. It was in this period that the American church ceased to be considered mission territory by the Vatican. More important, the promulgation of the Code of Canon Law in 1917 meant a more severe set of restrictions on religious women. The somewhat freewheeling experimentalism of the previous century fell victim to close administrative control of travel, obligations regarding the cloister, etc.

While this estimable volume is fundamentally a history of one religious community and, as such, will attract the attention of a particular audience, its larger merit is bringing into sharp focus something that needs regular emphasis: the historical role of women in the church. Such a focus allows us to peer into the minds of those nineteenth-century sisters who, in the Arizona missions, lead prayers and hymns on priestless Sundays, baptize dying infants, and "sprinkling the home-made coffins containing [the] dear ones, say some prayers, and then go to the grave for the older people as well as for the younger ones."

One element of the millennium hoopla is the emphasis on pilgrimage. Civil authorities in Rome tremble at the expected hordes coming to celebrate the jubilee while Israel also braces for huge numbers of pilgrims. Pilgrimage, of course, is a staple of Christian piety whose roots stretch back into the early patristic period. The meaning of pilgrimage has been amply explored by such savants as Edith and Victor Turner while historians, theologians, and others have noted the polyvalence of the practice. Perpetual pilgrimage was a feature of Celtic asceticism (exile and wandering might be the better term) while pilgrimage as a remedy for sin was a regular feature of medieval devotionalism as Chaucer and Margery Kempe testify.

Sacred Roads: Adventures from the Pilgrimage Trail
by Nicholas Shrady
HarperSanFrancisco, $22, 268 pp.

In *Sacred Roads: Adventures from the Pilgrimage Trail*, Nicholas Shrady, an American resident in Barcelona, describes a series of his own pilgrimages. In separate chapters he recounts his saunters (from the French *à sainte terre*) to the apparition site of Medjugorje, a boat trip down the Ganges to explore Hindu spirituality, a walking trip in India to follow the footsteps of the Buddha, the pilgrimage walk to Saint James in Campostella, a journey to Jerusalem, and a visit to the tomb of the Sufi saint and poet, Rumi, in what is present-day Turkey. These voyages are replete with derring-do, descriptions of exotic scenery, and some religious reflections.

Pascal said that most of the world's problems could be solved if people could only learn to stay in their own rooms. By the time I finished Shrady's book, this Pascalian truth seemed all the more true to me. Still, it is nice to have someone else do the more exotic traveling and then report to us. For that reason I enjoyed Shrady's reportage which, despite his own protestations, fits more into the genre of spiritually tinted tourism than into spirituality as such.

If one likes books of this genre, my recommendation would be to read William Darymple's brilliant *From the Holy Mountain* (1998) which retraces the travels of the seventh-century monk, John Moschus, through the Christian, largely monastic, world of the Middle East. By using Moschus's *The Spiritual Meadow* as his template, Darymple is able to keep his narrative sharp and focused. Shrady's book, by contrast, is more like one of those "If this is Tuesday, we must be in Varanasi" reports that keeps us moving relentlessly into ever more peculiar places.

The millennium celebration in Rome is also the year of what the pope calls "The Great Jubilee." This is the twenty-sixth time that a pope has declared such a "holy year," with the first, in 1300, announced by the unlovely Boniface VIII. Desmond O'Grady, a contributor to these pages and long-time resident in Rome, has written a history of the jubilees while, at the same time, commenting on the

Rome Reshaped: Jubilees 1300–2000
by Desmond O'Grady
Continuum, $24.50, 224 pp.

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evolving history of the papacy. He uses the word "reshape" in his title for good reason. He points out that the great streams of visitors to the Eternal City for the various jubilees have had a large impact on the city and its monuments. Such landmarks as Michelangelo's Pietà, the Spanish Steps, the dome frescoes of San Andrea della Valle, as well as, a number of Bernini's public works were all hurried along in anticipation of a jubilee year.

The original idea was to have a jubilee year once every century; that was soon modified to every fifty years and then to twenty-five. The increasing frequency of these celebrations coincided with the development of the doctrine of indulgences. More jubilees often meant more offerings from visiting pilgrims. Some celebrations were marred by various historical upheavals such as the Avignon exile of the popes or the sixteenth-century tumults brought about by the Reformation. A piece of sixteenth-century German doggerel in a volume of satirical poems contrasted the jubilee of Christ and that of Rome ending with the admonition: "Who wisely reads this book at home/Will not for pardon run to Rome."

What makes O'Grady's book such an excellent read is the interweaving of history, social commentary, and anecdote. We meet pilgrim enthusiasts like Philip Neri and Ignatius of Loyola. We learn that the Society of Jesus was missing from the 1775 jubilee because the Jesuit general was in prison in the Castel Sant'Angelo while the order underwent a process of suppression. We hear from Oscar Wilde, who loved being in the presence of the pope and was not unaware of the young clerics in the city. Among the minor characters in this panorama, my favorite was Master Titta who, from 1796 to 1864, served as the papal executioner, dispatching more than five hundred persons to the next life either by rope or by axe.

The final chapters of this enormously readable book provide a résumé of plans for the millennial jubilee. While the Vatican promises plenary indulgences for various pilgrim activities, such spiritual benefits play a rather insignificant part in the overall plan of activities. O'Grady puts more emphasis on the plan to honor twentieth-century martyrs, the papal desire for a jubilee forgiveness of debt to aid the poorer nations of the world, and the desire for reconciliation both inside and beyond the church. Whether all of these hopes will turn into reality is, of course, impossible to judge. Given the papal taste for the symbolic, one can only pray that some of John Paul's desires will find fruition.

O'Grady's book is not a scholarly one, but his long-time residence in Rome and his reputation as a well-prepared "vaticanologist" makes this a wonderful read. As an occasional resident of Rome myself, I found the book both highly informative and entertaining. Finishing it in two sittings, I desired even more. That is praise enough for this timely and well-written work. □

Lawrence S. Cunningham *teaches theology at the University of Notre Dame; his most recent book is* Thomas Merton and Monastic Wisdom *(Eerdmans).*

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LORD, WHEN DID I SMELL YOU?

Valerie Schulz

I walk into the library to read the *Los Angeles Times* on my lunch hour. I settle down with the Metro section and think, "What's that smell?" Belatedly I realize it's the guy sitting right across from me at the newspaper table. My nose tells me I should get up and move right now, but that would be rude. I'm committed.

Casually I turn to the editorials, then sneak a glance. My reading companion is hairy, dirty, rankly fragrant, with holes in his dusty black jeans. He wears long-traveled-in boots and several layers of clothes, even though the library is warm enough to please the oldest and most fragile patron on this snowy day. He is probably ten years younger than I, but not as well-preserved. He chews something very loudly. It snaps and crackles: a piece of plastic? The thing is white, in high contrast to his nubby teeth, and he maneuvers it around his mouth. It can't be gum—it's too unyielding. I think of it as his cud as he works it and works it.

He laughs at the funnies. I'm tempted to ask automatically, "What's so funny?" But I don't. I'd like to say, "STOP CHEWING! This is a library!" But I don't. He has the most powerful BO I've ever encountered. His hair is encrusted with winter and wind, which hold it in a slushy, stylish, devil-may-care kind of 'do. I doubt it is intentional.

Finished with the opinion pages, I scan the front page, the food recipes for the wok, the book reviews. He chews. He writes something with great care on the margin of the funnies. He uses a pencil, and erases his work as he finishes. He writes again, and erases again. Writes, erases. Chews. Stinks.

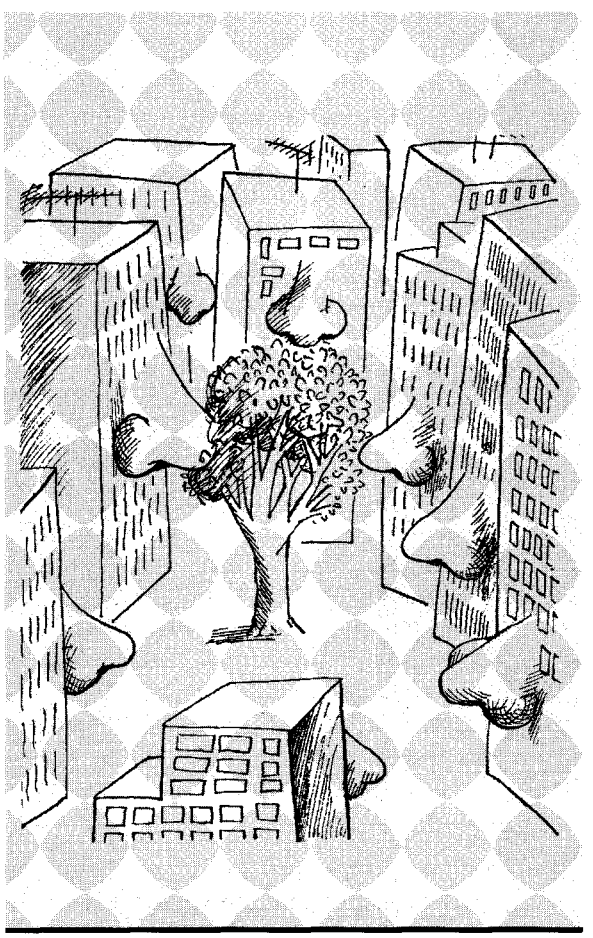
I begin to feel unjustly persecuted. I've worked hard all morning, and I deserve my library break. I want only quiet, only the smell of books.

Lord (I pray, sort of), I do my part. I work for the church. Every spring I get all the scrubbed little faces lined up to receive their First Communion: I am the director of religious education. I organize the monthly food party and community meal. I'm the one who picks up the commodities from the food bank, and it's fifty miles away. That means digging through the donated bins of marginal fruit to salvage plums or kiwis or oranges or broccoli, packing them in little bags, trucking them back for the people who can't afford fresh produce. I do it with a smile. And every last Sunday of the month I'm there cooking and serving and cleaning up. Do I have to put up with smelly homeless people on my lunch hour too?

I can all but hear a voice replying, simply: Yes.

He could say: Yes, you little Pharisee. But he doesn't. Jesus, ever forgiving, just gives me a good look at myself.

I think about my choices compared with those of my lunch-hour companion. I could have stayed in my office, or gone to the coffee house, or home. I could have put down fifty cents for my own copy of the *Times*. I chose to come here. His choice, quite possibly, was: library, or snow. I came for the change of scenery, for the escape from coworkers and ringing phones, for the quiet. He has come, probably, for the warmth. And the restroom. The library is an equal-opportunity refuge. It's not only for those who have showered, who have other resources. It's open and welcoming to all. In fact, it's rather like the church I say I believe in.



He has finished writing again. As I get up to leave, I look before he erases. LUKE SKYWALKER, he has written, all caps. He is practicing his signature. All this time I've been sitting with a visiting space hero, and didn't know it.

"See you tomorrow," I say. He chews and pops. He writes, luke skywalker, lower-case. May the Force be with us—both of us. □

Valerie Schulz *is a free-lance writer who lives is Tehachapi, California.*

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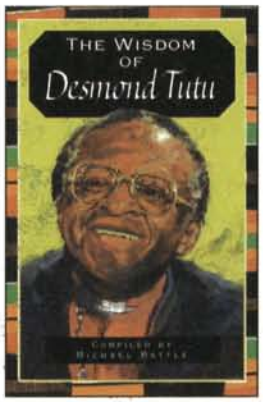

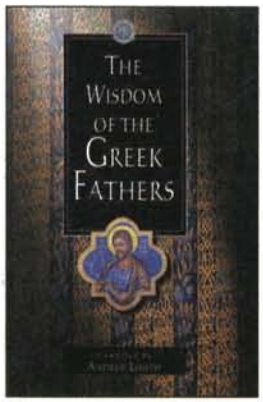

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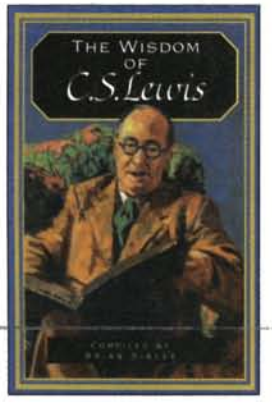

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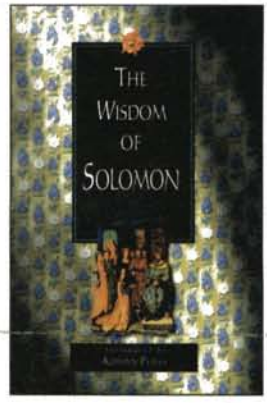

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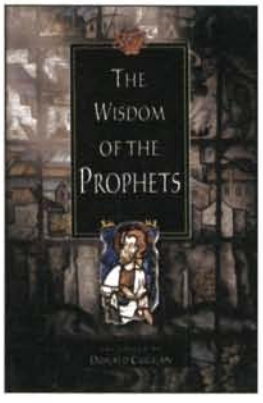

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